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HEAD OF AMENEMHET III IN OBSIDIAN

By permission of the publishers of the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*.

Frontispiece

ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

From the Earliest Times to the
Birth of Christ

BY

DONALD A. MACKENZIE

Author of "Ancient Man in Britain"

"Egyptian Myth and Legend"

"Colour Symbolism", &c. &c.

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INTRODUCTORY

This volume deals with the ancient Empires of Egypt, Asia, and South-eastern Europe from the earliest times of which we have knowledge till the birth of Christ, when a new era dawned upon the world. Special attention is paid to the problem of origins. It is shown that the history of modern civilization begins with the introduction of the agricultural mode of life, which enabled human beings to live in settled and organized communities as "food producers", and the establishment of kingdoms and empires became possible and necessary.

The history of modern civilization has been traced back for several thousand years before the beginning of the Christian era. But it occupies only a comparatively brief period in the history of man as a whole. The "Hunting" or "Food Gathering" Period in North Africa and Western Europe extends through the whole of the Pleistocene Age, and, of late, it has been carried into the Pliocene Age, the last stage of the geological Tertiary Period. Men were chipping flints and following the chase in the area now known as East Anglia many centuries before the beginning of the Great Ice Age. The maximum date for the dawn of the Palæolithic Age of the archæologists is 125,000 B.C., and the minimum date 32,000 B.C.

During the so-called pre-Palæolithic and Palæolithic Ages of the "food gatherers" the world was thinly peopled.

In the most favoured districts which had adequate water supplies, many animals to provide food, materials for shaping implements, and caves and rock shelters for protection from extreme cold or heat, the population could not have been greater than from 1 to 16 per square mile. Periodic migrations were absolutely necessary. When animals grew scarce owing to the increase of population, climatic changes or other causes, famine and disease must have taken a heavy toll of human life. The history of the Palæolithic Age was evidently a tragic one.

Although the story of man as a hunter can be carried back for so many thousands of years, there is little to tell of his progress. One of his greatest discoveries was how to produce and make use of fire. It is uncertain when that discovery was made, but there is evidence to show that in Lower Palæolithic times fires were lit under rock shelters. Neanderthal man used fire before Cro-Magnon man entered Western Europe at the beginning of the Aurignacian epoch.

As far back as the Pliocene Age, man was shaping tools and had discovered how to work flint. The story of his progress during many thousands of years is the story of his career as a flint worker, and it is a monotonous story. When, however, we reach the last phase of the Ice Age, it is found that a wonderful art had been developed. It was apparently a product of magico-religious beliefs, for it was mainly concerned with depicting the animals on which the hunters fed. The Cro-Magnon peoples buried their dead with ceremony, as did also some of the earlier Neanderthal peoples, smearing the corpses with red earth and adorning them with amulets. It would appear that the small communities were united by a religious bond. But for long centuries the Hunting mode of life continued with little change. Man was chiefly occupied in obtaining daily supplies of perishable food.

The period of stagnation came to an end when the discovery of agriculture was made. Nomadism ceased in those areas in which the new mode of life was adopted, and an era of steady progress was ushered in.

There are differences of opinion among archæologists as to where the agricultural mode of life was inaugurated. Some favour Egypt, some Mesopotamia, and some Central Asia. But it is to the agricultural scientist rather than the archæologist that one turns for a decision in this connexion. The former reminds us that the barley and millet grown by the pioneer farmers are cultivated wild grasses. These wild grasses were found over wide areas, but in those in which the seeds remained very small, they could hardly have attracted the attention of human beings.

There is only one area in the world in which wild barley and millet were cultivated by nature, and that is Egypt. There the seeds became sufficiently plump to attract attention to their food value. Agriculture was originally, it would appear, a gift of the Nile. That wonderful river rises, floods, and retreats at the right season to promote the cultivation of cereals without the aid of man. The story of how it taught men how to grow crops is told in Chapter I. In Mesopotamia, on the other hand, the rivers Tigris and Euphrates flood at the wrong time. When their waters retreat in the hot season vegetation is burned up. Not until the irrigation natural in Egypt was introduced into Lower Mesopotamia could the agricultural mode of life have been practised with success. In India the rivers Indus and Ganges similarly flood in the hot season, while the Yellow River of China is also flooded by summer rains.

The claim urged in favour of Egypt as the area in which agriculture was first introduced is confirmed by remarkable evidence that has come to light of late years. From pre-dynastic graves have been recovered naturally mummified

bodies which were preserved in the hot, dry sands. The contents of stomachs have yielded husks of barley and millet native to Egypt. It is evident, therefore, that the proto-Egyptians did not obtain seeds from outside sources. They cultivated Nilotic cereals and followed nature's lead by extending the area irrigated by the Nile.

Professor James Henry Breasted has, in a recent series of lectures on "The Origins of Civilization",¹ shown that "the alluvium of Egypt began to be laid down before the end of the last European Glacial Period, some eight or ten thousand years ago". Boring operations have brought to light fragments of pottery made by the early inhabitants of the Nile valley. These pioneers "gradually acquired ability to cultivate the wild grasses, the ancestors of our own cultivated cereals, and also achieved the conquest of the wild life and its transformation into our domesticated animals. The men who accomplished these things gradually reclaimed the jungles of the Nile."

Dealing with the theory that civilization was introduced into Egypt from Asia, Breasted writes:

"Must we suppose that there never was any pure Neolithic culture in the Nile valley?—that the uninhabited Nile rift was invaded by outsiders already acquainted with metal?—and that for this reason the cemeteries of a metal-using people suddenly begin some centuries before 4000 B.C.? If we answer this question in the affirmative, we must assume the extinction or emigration of the pottery-makers disclosed by the borings in the lower alluvium. A population which had earlier maintained itself for many thousands of years along the Egyptian rift from the days of the plateau hunters, through their descent to the river terraces, until their occupancy of the lower alluvium and the discovery of pottery, . . . cannot be conceived to have disappeared from north-eastern Africa, leaving it uninhabited until some centuries before 4000 B.C."

¹ Reproduced in *The Scientific Monthly*, 1919-20.

Professor Breasted is convinced that the natives of the Nile valley "originated animal husbandry and domesticated our food grains", and he points out that "the grain found in the bodies of the prehistoric Egyptians and in the pottery jars accompanying them, dating back to 4000 B.C., is the oldest cultivated grain known to us, by over a thousand years". He thinks it possible that the rise of agriculture may have begun as far back as 5000 B.C. Flax was cultivated by the prehistoric Egyptians whose bodies have been found in the earliest known cemeteries. Breasted notes that these bodies "often lie on a reed mat, with flaxen cord", and that "some of them are wrapped in linen already displaying a good deal of textile skill".

Another gift to civilization made by Egypt was the navigable boat which was developed from the reed floats. Naval architects who have investigated the problem recognize the prehistoric Egyptian river boat as the prototype of the deep-sea ships of the Dynastic Age. There was no Mesopotamian ship. The earliest ships that plied in ancient times on the Indian Ocean and on the Mediterranean Sea were of Egyptian type. On Mesopotamian rivers the kufa and raft were anciently in use, and these are still known, being incapable of further development. Boats of wood could not have been constructed until after the shape and proportions of a boat had been discovered by men who conducted experiments with lighter and more easily used material. The earliest boats were bound reeds, and the Egyptian name for the earliest reed boats and the earliest imitation wooden boats was "The Binding".

Those priceless gifts to civilization—agriculture and the navigable boat—were made by Egypt long before the introduction of metal working. River boats and sea-going vessels could be constructed with stone tools in Ancient Egypt, as in modern Polynesia.

Archæologists are not agreed as to where metals were first worked. Some favour Egypt, some Elam, and some Armenia or Anatolia. De Morgan, who is inclined to look to Asia for the solution of the problem, is convinced that the first metallurgical essays could not have been made in Chaldea (Sumeria) or in Iran, and he points out that gold was used as early as copper.¹

The chief source from which the Dynastic Egyptians obtained copper was the peninsula of Sinai. But it does not follow that the metal was first worked in that area or, indeed, in any area in which the natural supplies were plentiful. The discovery that malachite contains copper may have been made quite by accident in a district where malachite was comparatively rare. Then the discoverer may have caused others to search for deposits of the ore. For a long period copper was used in Egypt, merely to make pins and small ornaments or amulets for personal wear.

Copper came into general use very slowly. "Nowhere," says De Morgan, "does the appearance of copper modify the customs and usages of the Neolithic peoples." The transition period, which is referred to as the Eneolithic, was a long one. De Morgan writes in this connexion:

"It should be noted that metal, being an extremely precious material, was handled with great care at its inception, and thus, that many stations classed as Neolithic because copper is absent, really belong to the Eneolithic stage; some archæologists are even of opinion that the concluding polished stone phases, among different peoples, should all be ranged with the new-born metal industry; I am not far from sharing this opinion as regards Egypt and North Africa."²

The introduction of metal working was of less importance in the history of man than the introduction of agriculture.

¹ *Prehistoric Man*, London, 1924, pp. 104-5.

² De Morgan, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

Empires began to be after agricultural civilizations were established in Egypt and Mesopotamia. The farmers had to live in organized communities directed by rulers who were regarded as representatives of the forces of nature. When the solar calendar was introduced the Pharaoh was "the son of the sun"—a god among men; he was the earthly form of the controller of the seasons and of the River Nile. The kingship was in origin a religious concept.

In Egypt the development of irrigation created problems of far-reaching interest and importance affecting the welfare of the inhabitants of the Nile valley. The water might be drawn upon so generously in one area during the period of the low Nile as to cause a shortage in another area. It therefore became a necessity to have central control—that a centralized government should be established to ensure equal treatment to all areas. Several petty states came into existence during the long pre-Dynastic Period. Apparently war broke out between some of these on account of water disputes. Then the southern and northern states were grouped into little empires. Upper and Lower Egypt became known as the "Two Lands". In time the Pharaoh of Upper Egypt conquered the confederacy ruled over by the Pharaoh of Lower Egypt, and the Dynastic Age was ushered in. According to Egyptian tradition the conqueror was Mena. Probably he was a notable figure in the last phase of a struggle which may have been waged for centuries. Some kind of union was effected before the Dynastic Age began, because the double crown was worn by several Pharaohs who preceded Mena. The final conquest was completed by agreement, for the ruling Pharaoh wore the double crown, lived in a double palace, and appointed separate groups of officials for the united kingdoms. This dualism of control was reflected in the official religious system. Egyptian dualism was afterwards transferred to those areas

which came directly or indirectly under the influence of Egyptian civilization.

The next phase of empire building was reached when well organized and progressive communities like those of Egypt and Mesopotamia established colonies in Western Asia. These colonies controlled the "spheres of influence" from which the leading states drew supplies of the various materials they had learned to make use of and for which there was a growing demand. Supplies of metal and wood were constantly required both in Mesopotamia and Egypt, and the former required, in addition, stone of various kinds for their material or religious needs. The establishment of colonies and trading posts did not, however, wrong the aborigines in occupied areas. To backward peoples contact with the centres of civilization was wholly beneficial. They were enabled to pass from the Hunting to the Agricultural stage of civilization, to abandon nomadic habits, and to settle in organized communities. Areas which had been sparsely populated by peoples living constantly on the edge of want, became capable of sustaining comparatively large populations, which were organized on Egyptian or Mesopotamian lines, as the case might be. Withal, commerce was stimulated by the introduction of new industries. Those who perpetuated the hunting mode of life found ready markets for their surplus supplies of perishable food, and received in exchange the food produced by agriculturists, which could be stored for the periodical "lean times" that were formerly so critical and often so tragic for them.

The spread of civilization was a direct result of the process of colonization and empire building. Its maintenance and control involved the use of force. Communities threatened by the inroads of bands of half-starved nomads had necessarily to defend themselves. The subjection of

those peoples who had adopted robbery as a tribal industry was also a form of self protection. Early pioneers of civilization who had penetrated various areas in the ancient world were not concerned about establishing Utopias, nor were those against whom it was found necessary to resort to arms. The establishment of peace was effected for the same reason as the *pax Romana* ("the peace of Rome") was ultimately established in those areas in which Rome was able to make good its threat of punishment for any infringement of its legal code.

A new phase of empire building emerged when rival Powers began to struggle for supremacy. The Egyptian and Mesopotamian peoples had influenced wide areas, establishing colonies and opening up trade routes. In time new Powers came into existence and not only asserted their independence, but endeavoured to subdue their former rulers and instructors. Ultimately the Egyptians were overwhelmed and subdued by the Hyksos, and the Babylonians of Mesopotamia by the Kassites. These conquering peoples had never originated anything, but they had studied the science of war, and, by establishing military aristocracies, were able to exploit the peoples upon whom they had by force imposed their wills. When Egypt ultimately expelled the intruders, it set out on a career of conquest in Western Asia until Thothmes III ultimately extended the frontier of the Egyptian Empire to the borders of Anatolia. Babylonia never recovered its former supremacy. The Kassite overlords were overthrown by Assyria, which was organized as a great predatory power and for long laid a heavy hand upon Babylonia. In Anatolia the Hittites had similarly increased in strength and aggressiveness, and Egypt was bereft of a large part of its empire. Then in time Assyria subdued all Western Asia and conquered Egypt.

After reaching the zenith of its power as a military empire,

Assyria was overthrown by the Medes and Scythians, who had formed an alliance with Babylonia. But the future lay with Persia. Cyrus laid the foundations of a great Persian Empire which ultimately included within its bounds Babylonia, Assyria, Anatolia, and Egypt. That empire endured until, after being deeply wounded in its struggle with Greece, it was conquered by Alexander the Great.

Although Alexander's empire went to pieces soon after his death, the ancient Powers which had instructed the world in the arts and crafts of civilization never recovered their vitality. Their influence remained deep-rooted over wide areas, but the world had grown too large and its institutions too complex to be controlled from the little cradles of ancient civilization.

Like other conquerors before him, Alexander had many imitators. Some founded dynasties to rule over portions of the vast area he had subdued; others imitated his methods in India and elsewhere. But although Alexander's Empire collapsed like a house of cards when premature death stilled that active brain and subdued that iron will, the world was never the same again after his time. Asia was penetrated by the cultural influence of Greece, which had supplanted that of Egypt on the one hand and that of Babylonia on the other. Europe, too, came under the spell of Greek culture, which extended far beyond the area of Greek control. When Rome arose with dramatic suddenness to the position of a world Power, it did so not merely as the conqueror of Greece and the inheritor of a large area of Alexander's Empire, but as the guardian of Hellenic civilization.

The civilization of Greece was rooted in that of Ancient Egypt. Its origin was formerly a mystery to our historians, but the discoveries of the present century have established the fact that it began to be on the island of Crete. As Sir Arthur Evans has shown of late, Cretan civilization was an

offshoot of that of Egypt. To Greece and Rome modern civilization owes, as all students of history readily recognize, a deep and incalculable debt. We who still use the Egyptian calendar which was first introduced by the pioneer agriculturists in the Nile valley, and measure time and space according to the Babylonian system, must also recognize that Greece and Rome could never have been had not the little leaven of river valley civilization leavened the whole lump of the ancient world. The history of our arts and our sciences, the history of our social institutions, and the history of trade and economics, cannot be studied fully without reference to the most ancient civilizations in the world. We cannot, therefore, pay too much attention to the problem of origins.

This book concludes with the birth of Christ, who ushered in a new Age in the world's history, and to whom in our day many millions of human beings turn in their perplexity as did the poet Tennyson when he wrote:

Thine are these orbs of light and shade;
Thou madest Life in man and brute;
Thou madest Death; and lo, Thy foot
Is on the skull which Thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
Thou madest man, he knows not why;
He thinks he was not made to die;
And Thou hast made him: Thou art just.

.
Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.

Ancient Egyptian Chronology

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN CHRONOLOGY

Introduction of Calendar, 4241 or 4238 B.C.

Ist Dynasty of United Egypt established between 3400 and 3500 B.C.
(Meyer gives 3315 B.C.; Breasted, 3400 B.C.; H. R. Hall, 3500 B.C.;
Lepsius, 3892 B.C.; Flinders Petrie, 5510 B.C.).

IVth Dynasty began with Khufu (Cheops) between 2900 and 3050 B.C.
(Breasted gives 2900 B.C.; H. R. Hall, 3050 B.C.; Petrie, 4731 B.C.).

Vith Dynasty began between 2625 and 2750 B.C. (Meyer gives 2540
B.C.; Petrie, 4206 B.C.).

Vith Dynasty ended about 2475 B.C. (Breasted); 2600 B.C. (Hall).

VIIIth Dynasty (end of "Old Kingdom") closes about 2445 B.C.
(Breasted), 2400 B.C. (Hall).

XIIth Dynasty (in "Middle Kingdom" period) begins about 2000 B.C.
(Breasted and Meyer); 2122 B.C. (Hall); 2778 B.C. (Petrie).

XIIIth to XVIIth Dynasties, 1788 to 1580 B.C. (Breasted) (Hyksos kings
were reigning between 1600 B.C. and 1700 B.C., but the duration of
the Hyksos period is uncertain).

XVIIIth Dynasty (Egypt again independent) began 1580 B.C.

Thothmes III (the "Napoleon" of the Empire period) died 1447 B.C.

Akhenaton ("Heretic" King) began to reign about 1375 B.C. (Breasted);
1380 B.C. (Hall).

Tutankhamon died before 1350 B.C.

Rameses I (of XIXth Dynasty) began to reign 1315 B.C. (Breasted); 1321
B.C. (Hall).

Rameses II, c. 1300-1234 B.C. (Hall); 1292-1225 B.C. (Breasted).

Rameses III (of XXth Dynasty), 1198-1167 B.C. (Breasted).

Sheshonk I (Shishak) of XXIInd Dynasty, 945-924 B.C. (Breasted);
947-925 B.C. (Hall).

Psamtek I (of XXVIth Dynasty), 663-609 B.C. (Breasted); 651-610 B.C.
(Hall).

Conquest of Egypt by Persians, 525 B.C.

Egypt seized by Alexander the Great, 332 B.C.

Ptolemaic period, 332-30 B.C.

Egypt becomes a province of Rome, 30 B.C.

CHAPTER I

The Dawn of Civilization

Discovery of Agriculture—The Nilotic Year—Heavenly Bodies as Controllers of Nature—Agricultural Calendar—The Kingship—Agricultural Co-operation in Egypt—Early Thinkers and Leaders—Religion and Natural Laws—Calendar and centralized Government—"Little Leaven" of ancient World—Origin of Carpentry—Discovery of Copper—Early colonial Enterprise—World thinly peopled by Hunters—What Ancient Egyptians ate—Nature's Lead in Nile Valley—Spread of Agriculture—the Wheat Problem—Nature's Bricks—Beginning of Gold Washing—Invention of Boats—Earliest masted Ships—Development of Navigation—How Copper Ore was first used—Malachite Symbolism—Egyptian Metallurgists—Activities of ancient Mariners—Phœnicians, &c., used Egyptian Type of Ship.

The story of the ancient empires may be said to begin with the discovery of agriculture. Before the early peoples could live in organized communities and establish centres of commerce and administration, they had to solve the problem of food production. It was necessary that they should be relieved of the necessity of migrating periodically from hunting-ground to hunting-ground, and of devoting the greater part of each day to catching fish and following the chase. When, however, they began to cultivate cereals and root crops, which could be stored in quantities adequate to their needs between the harvests, fixed settlements became not only possible but necessary, and a beginning was made in building up the fabric of civilization.

The earliest civilizations of which we have knowledge, flourished in the river valleys of Egypt and Lower Mesopotamia. In those limited areas organized communities had,

before 3000 B.C., adopted the agricultural mode of life, achieved considerable skill in the arts and crafts and acquired experience in trading and the science of government. Their stores of food constituted their wealth, and wealth brought them that degree of leisure which was necessary for progress in all directions. Withal, the practice of the agricultural mode of life disciplined the early peoples, for it required regularized habits of life and necessitated the recognition of individual rights and the protection of property, conditions which constitute the fundamental principles of all legal codes, ancient and modern. It had also its educative influence; for the early farmers had to take an intelligent interest in natural phenomena. In Egypt, for instance, the pioneers of agricultural civilization were tutored by the river Nile, which was found to rise and fall regularly and, as if by design, to do so at the periods most suitable for the cultivation of cereals. It provided an abundance of fertilizing water at the beginning of the cool season and was lowest during the hot season when vegetation was burned up, and the land lay parched and sterile.

The Nile measured the year for the early Egyptians, and they observed that their year was sharply divided into three seasons—the season of inundation, the season of coolness, and the season of heat. It was also observed that the heavenly bodies had seasonal movements. The rising of the star Sirius, which the Egyptians named “Year”, coincided with the beginning of the inundation. Orion rose and set and seemed, like Sirius, to be a celestial controller of nature. But the star groups which were at an early period regarded as of most importance were those of the north. They were called the “Imperishable Ones”, and were supposed to be the deified souls of rulers. The “Great Bear” (Ursa Major), revolving round the steadfast Pole Star, indicates the seasons, pointing with its tail

eastward in spring, southward in summer, westward in autumn, and northward in winter. It thus pointed southward at the beginning of the inundation period in Egypt, and northward during the cool season.

References to the stars appear in the Pyramid Texts—the oldest known inscriptions in the world—but these are often obscure, for they refer to myths which had grown vague and complex before the texts were inscribed. What remains quite clear, however, is the belief that the heavenly bodies were supposed to control Nature and that therefore, according to the Egyptian way of thinking, there was divine life in the sky.

Among the heavenly bodies the moon appears to have, on account of its frequent and regular changes, attracted much attention in early times. The agriculturists, having of necessity given recognition to the Nilotic year, and of its division into three well-defined seasons, took note of the movements of the moon, and divided the seasons into lunar months. Then they subdivided the months according to the lunar phases, selecting the three most outstanding of these—the crescent phase, the half-moon phase, and the full-moon phase. This system gave origin to the decadal week, the week of ten days. The year had twelve months of thirty days, with five festival days added.

The solar calendar was introduced some time after 2900 B.C.—that is, after the lunar calendar had been in use for several centuries. It was introduced by the solar cult which exalted the sun-god above all other deities. The old moon-god then became the scribe and messenger of the sun-god, and the star-gods were placed in the boat of the sun. This process of the fusion of cults can be traced in the Pyramid Texts of the sun-worshippers. “There are,” Breasted writes, “utterances in the Pyramid Texts which define the stellar notion of the hereafter without any refer-

ence to the solar faith, which have doubtless descended from a more ancient day when the stellar notion had been absorbed in the solar.”¹ The Pharaoh was supposed to go after death to the sun-boat of Re, but in Pyramid Text 464 he is addressed as “ the lofty one (the Pole Star) among the Imperishable Stars (the northern stars) ”.

During the IVth Dynasty the solar cult was of growing importance. It was politically supreme at the beginning of the Vth Dynasty, and the solar calendar was then imposed upon all Egypt. This is the calendar which Julius Cæsar had adjusted and introduced into Europe. It has continued in use, with subsequent readjustments, till the present day.

From the beginning, the calendar was not only closely connected with the agricultural mode of life, but with religion and the kingship. Pharaoh was the living representative of the chief god who controlled the world, and from the Vth Dynasty onwards, each Pharaoh was called “ son of the sun ”. The kingship was an absolute necessity in a country like Egypt. Professor Breasted writes in this connection:

“ One of the most powerful influences towards unity and organized development in a rainless climate like that of Egypt, was the necessity of creating an ever more complicated irrigation system. To maintain such a system, to keep each of its long canals free from obstruction, and to control the supply of water, required the co-operation of large groups of communities, created a consciousness of community of interest and a willingness to submit to a central authority in control of the whole. . . . The possession of grain fields and the maintenance of herds which must be pastured, bound great groups of communities to a common system for the support of the whole, which could never have grown up among the hunting chieftains of earlier days.”²

¹ *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, pp. 101-2.

² *The Origins of Civilization* (Washington lectures) reprinted from *The Scientific Monthly* 1919-20 p 432.

It should not be assumed that the system of measuring time which brought the Egyptian calendar into existence, occurred spontaneously to every little farmer in the Nile valley. In ancient, as in modern times, important discoveries had to be made by individuals who were more enlightened than their fellows. All men are not thinkers, observers, and seekers after knowledge; most are prone to follow in the beaten path and do as their fathers have done before them. It has always been the case in the history of man that a few have led and the many have followed. The real legislators are those who discover, invent, organize and control for the good of the greater number.

No doubt, it was some enterprising individual who first discovered agriculture and taught his fellows how food could be produced. The Egyptians themselves had a tradition that the first farmer was King Osiris, and that he instructed men how to cultivate the soil and grow crops. The calendar must have been introduced by an individual, or group of individuals, engaged in the organization of society, and it was undoubtedly imposed by law, being, to begin with, part of a legal system. In ancient times all laws were connected with religion, and religion was itself a reflection of natural laws, for man felt himself dependent on the controllers of the natural forces which ensured him his food supply. He worshipped the heavenly bodies, or the deities of the heavenly bodies, because these appeared to control the seasons and the water supply necessary for the production of food. "The modern fallacy," writes Professor Elliot Smith, "of supposing that he (early man) spent his time in contemplation of the world around him, speculating upon the nature of the stars above him, or devising theories of the soul, is probably as far from the truth as it would be to assume that the average modern Englishman is absorbed in the problems of zoology, astro-

nomy, and metaphysics. . . . What the ethnologist usually fails to recognize is that among primitive men, as amongst modern scholars, before attempting to solve a problem it is essential to recognize that there is a problem to solve. The sun to the primitive man was as much a matter of course as the air is to many of us. Unless definite instruction in physics and chemistry were provided, how many people would realize that there was anything to discover about the air?"¹

As Elliot Smith insists, "the sun and moon were not regarded by primitive man as objects of scientific curiosity until a very special train of reasoning, excited probably by certain circumstances in the early practice of agriculture, compelled him to give some thought to matters which seemed to affect his means of livelihood."²

When the solar calendar, which justified sun-worship, was imposed by law, centralized government had come into existence, and all Egypt was united under a single king. The influence exercised by the small group of rulers then became intensified, and progress was stimulated. But progress was first of all made possible, as has been indicated, by the introduction of the agricultural mode of life, which was gradually extended in the Nile valley and was adopted and extended in Lower Mesopotamia. Ultimately the "little leavens" of river-valley agricultural civilization leavened "the whole lump" of the ancient world. This process, however, was not the result of deliberate and altruistic missionary effort, as set forth in Plutarch's version of the Osirian myth which tells that King Osiris first civilized his countrymen in the Nile valley and "afterwards travelled over the rest of the world, inducing people everywhere to submit to his discipline"; it was rather the result of the accidental contact of progressive with backward peoples.

¹ *Primitive Man* (*Proceedings of the British Academy*, Vol. VII, pp. 38-9). ² *Ibid.*, p. 38.

Both river valleys were suitable for agricultural activities—that of Egypt because Nature had been irrigating the soil for many centuries before man was induced to follow her example, and that of Lower Mesopotamia after irrigation had been introduced as the result of experience gained elsewhere. As it chanced, both these areas are lacking in certain materials for which a demand was created after the agricultural mode of life was established. Timber, for instance, had to be procured from a distance, but not until after timber was appreciated as a material useful to man. In Egypt carpentry appears to have had origin by utilizing the *Acacia Nilotica*, which is referred to in the Pentateuch as “the favourite wood in the desert for cabinet work”.¹ But after copper came into use and metal saws were invented and large blocks of wood could be sawn—a thing not possible when small saws were made of flint—cedar was imported from Lebanon and juniper from Anatolia.

The discovery of copper and of the uses to which that useful metal could be put, provided the incentive for the search for copper ore. Egypt has, so far, provided the oldest copper implements that have been discovered. There were limited supplies of copper ore in certain wadis to the east of the Nile, and especially in Wadi Allagi, which also yielded gold. “According to a mining engineer who has been repeatedly through this region,” writes Dr. W. F. Albright, “the mountains between Nubia (Upper Egypt) and the sea (the Red Sea) are cupriferous and rich in copper carbonate or malachite, which occurs as incrustations in connexion with ore deposits. . . . A list from the time of Rameses II distinguished between two mountains of malachite, one in Africa and one in Asia, and other texts also bring malachite from the eastern desert. . . . The Egyptian gold land, *par excellence*, was the mountainous region of

¹ *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, Vol. VII, p. 82

the Nubian desert, from the latitude of Esneh southward to Abyssinia, the hinterland of the Egyptian Punt from which the Egyptians brought gold dust."¹

Evidence has been forthcoming of the activities of the early prospectors. The Red Sea appears to have been visited by them as far back as the late pre-Dynastic Age. Cowry shells found in early graves were carried from the Red Sea as well as from the Mediterranean. These and other shells had been given a religious value. Among the earliest specimens of Egyptian jewellery which have come to light is a necklace of gold imitations of snail-shells.² The shell route to and from the Red Sea crossed the area in which gold was found in ancient times, and where it can still be obtained in small quantities.

In addition to the supplies of copper ore in Nubia, there were considerable deposits in Sinai which were ultimately located and worked. The nearest deposits of copper to the people of Lower Mesopotamia were in the highlands of Elam in South-western Persia. Deposits of greater value were, in later times, located and worked in Asia Minor.

Once the demand for copper became considerable, prospectors had to undertake long journeys to discover new sources of supply. These journeys were made possible after the agriculturists had begun to provide food which could be carried across the deserts and among the hills, so that the prospectors might not be wholly dependent on game for sustenance.

The discoveries made by the prospectors not only promoted civilization in the home country, by increasing the supplies of raw material required by the craftsmen, but caused the dissemination of civilization over gradually widening areas into which small bands of colonists intro-

¹ *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, Vol. VIII, p. 83.

² G. A. Reisner, *Early Dynastic Cemeteries of Naga-ed-Dêr*.

duced the agricultural mode of life. These colonies became "trading" centres to which expeditions were periodically dispatched. In time fresh colonies "budded" from them. The areas to which the early prospectors were attracted were not, however, exploited at the expense of their inhabitants, because the hunters did not require, value, or search for the ores, or cut down the timber required by the agriculturists of Egypt and Lower Mesopotamia. Contact with the intruders was to them wholly of beneficial character, for they acquired, as a result, the elements of civilization. An inevitable result of contact was the dawn of the idea of Empire—a concept which was rooted in sheer necessity. The right to the unexploited natural wealth of any particular area seemed to be vested in those who could make adequate use of it. Racial claims to any particular area were wholly of fortuitous character, and were ultimately decided by force—conquest by warriors and retention by means of military strength.

To visualize the conditions under which the earliest efforts in colonial enterprise took place, it must be realized that before the discovery of agriculture inaugurated a new era in the history of man, the world was thinly peopled and the population almost stationary except in specially favoured localities. The food supply was obtained mainly by hunting wild animals and catching fish; nuts and berries were to be obtained in some areas, but not in Europe until after the passing of the cold post-glacial period. We do not know whether the ancient hunters were accustomed to preserve flesh and fish, as by the drying or smoking processes. It may be that the Cro-Magnon cave-dwellers in Western Europe discovered that flesh could be preserved by smoke, and, during their severe winters, by the action of frost. Perhaps it was due to the fact that they were able to conserve a portion of their food for limited periods, especially

during the coldest season, that they were given sufficient leisure to develop the wonderful cave art of the Aurignacian and Magdalenian epochs and the fine craftsmanship in flint during the Solutrean epoch. In warm countries, however, it is unlikely that flesh and fish could have been kept for very long. The hunter had to be constantly engaged; and when there was a shortage of animals, the death-rate caused by famine must have been exceedingly heavy. Besides, the population occupying a circumscribed area had to be limited in accordance with its resources. Tribes of hunters required wide areas in which to operate. In those districts where the supplies of fish were abundant, the food supply provided by the hunters could be supplemented. But the catches could never have been great. There were no hooks and no nets. Fish were caught by the slow and laborious process of spearing. "Guddling" may have been practised, but only in small streams.

The early hunting period was one of stagnation. Wide areas had no permanent population and were visited occasionally by nomadic bands; those areas which were in constant occupation had scattered tribes and family groups. "They were always near the edge of want," writes Professor Cherry, with reference to the ancient hunters, "because the family was dependent from day to day on the results of the day's work. The coming and going of bird, fish, and beast cannot be controlled by man." With the discovery of agriculture which caused such a revolution in early times, the period of stagnation came to an end in the two great river valleys of Egypt and Mesopotamia in which modern civilization had origin.

In Ancient Egypt the cereals cultivated were those native to the land. This interesting fact, so important in the history of civilization, has been established by evidence of convincing character. Bodies of pre-Dynastic Egyptians buried in the

hot dry sands have survived for over sixty centuries, having been naturally mummified. Some of these have been dissected and the contents of their stomachs examined so as to ascertain "the precise nature of the prehistoric diet". Professor G. Elliot Smith, who conducted the "post-mortems", placed the contents of the stomachs and intestines in the hands of Dr. Fritz Netolitzky for expert examination.

"Almost every sample contained husks of barley, and in about 10 per cent of the specimens husks of millet could be identified with certainty. . . . Root tubers of *Cyperus esculentus* were found both in the intestinal contents and in pots placed in the graves alongside the bodies. These tubers were of very small size, which Dr. Netolitzky regards as evidence of either the utilization of the wild plant or the beginning of its cultivation. Remains of other plants that had been employed either as food or drugs were also found."

Fish scales and bones and fragments of mammalian bone were also discovered among the contents of stomachs.¹ The pre-Dynastic Egyptians therefore cultivated the wild barley and millet grasses and tubers growing on the banks of the Nile, hunted down the wild animals in their valley, and caught fish in their river.

The Nile valley was peculiarly suited to be the cradle of early civilization, for there Nature gave a lead to man and even forced upon him the solution of problems which led to discoveries of far-reaching importance. It does not follow that it was because the proto-Egyptians, the congeners of the Mediterranean race in Europe and of the early agriculturists in Western Asia, were endowed with larger brains or stronger bodies than the rest of humanity, that they were enabled to become the teachers and leaders of other peoples in early times. It was really because they chanced to settle in an area which disciplined and educated them and gave

¹ Elliot Smith, *The Ancient Egyptians* (2nd edition, pp. 48 et seq.).

opportunities to their more enlightened members to make discoveries that effected a complete social revolution.

Civilization, like the very land of Egypt, is “the gift of the Nile”.

The Nile is the only great river in the world which rises in flood towards the close of the hot season and promotes the growth of vegetation during the period of comparative coolness. Wild barley grasses growing on its banks flourished after the soil had been drenched during inundation; and after the river shrank within its banks and the barley ripened, the seeds fell into the dry soil in that almost rainless country and remained in a state of perfect preservation until the river rose again in flood, bringing down new soil impregnated with fertilizers, and causing the seeds to sprout and the plants to flourish. The Nile thus of itself cultivated barley and made the seeds grow sufficiently plump to attract the attention of man. Elsewhere the wild barley remains in its original state, and of no value as a human food, until developed by man just as it was for many long centuries developed by the Nile in the land of Egypt.

Not only did the Nile rise and fall at the right times so as to provide an abundant food supply for man and beast; it also of itself formed irrigation channels. Early man, once he discovered the nutritive value of the naturally-cultivated wild barley and millet grasses, began to be a farmer by following Nature's lead. He distributed seeds over wider areas, re-opened choked irrigation channels which had been formed in the previous year, and scraped out new channels so as to extend the area of cultivation.

Professor Cherry, the distinguished Australian agricultural scientist, has pointed out with regard to the Nile that “the conditions which have always existed in Egypt are paralleled by those of no other river in the world”. In Mesopotamia the river floods occur in the hot season, and when the waters

retreat all vegetation is burned up; in India the Indus and the Ganges similarly flood early in summer as does also the Yellow River in China. "Thus," writes Professor Cherry, "the incidence of the flood season is all in favour of Egypt as the place where the art of irrigation originated. It is the only land where the annual flood produces crops without any assistance. On the Euphrates the preliminary requisites are an embankment to keep off the flood and a canal to bring the water from the river at the proper time of the year." Apparently it was after early man had followed nature's guidance in Egypt that he developed the art of irrigation and applied elsewhere the results of his practical experience. On the banks of the southward-flowing rivers of Mesopotamia he developed the methods which nature had taught him on the banks of the northward-flowing river of Egypt.

The seeds of cultivated Egyptian barley were imported into Europe and Asia, and with these seeds went not only the early agricultural implements, including the flint sickle, but also the ceremonies and myths of Egyptian origin. Each agricultural area must therefore have become a centre from which the elements of the new civilization were distributed. It is of special interest to note in this connection that the myth of Osiris reached Britain and is still being told in Gaelic. A Scottish fairy tale contains a glimpse of the underground Osirian paradise. It tells that a woman who entered a fairy mound had "three drops of a precious liquid" poured on her left eyelid. The story continues:

"She beheld a most delicious country, whose fields were yellow with ripening corn, watered by looping burnies (streams) and bordered by trees laden with fruit. She was presented with webs of the finest cloth, and with boxes of precious ointments. The fairy then moistened her (the woman's) right eye with a green fluid and bid her look. She looked and saw several of her



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EGYPTIAN NOBLE AT THE COUNTING OF HIS CATTLE

A model made about 2000 B.C., and recently discovered in a rock-chamber near Thebes. Reproduced by courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

friends and acquaintances at work, reaping the corn and gathering the fruit. 'This,' said the fairy, 'is the punishment of evil deeds'."

In another story a young man obtains a glimpse of a fairy banquet. The table was green "with feet of gold", and it is stated that

"he saw there several of his former acquaintances who were become members of the fairy society".

Cultivated wheat was introduced into Mesopotamia at a later date than into Egypt, and apparently, too, direct from Egypt, because the Sumerians, as Professor Breasted reminds us,¹ called wheat by its Egyptian name. A wild wheat (*Triticum monococcum*) grows in Mesopotamia and its straw "occurs in mud bricks from the Euphrates and also from the second city of Troy". It has been assumed by some writers that this wheat was cultivated by the Sumerians, while others favour the wild wheat which has been found growing on Mount Carmel. But Professor Biffin, Cambridge, who has been working with Carmel wheat for several years, says that it has "a dominant character—the faculty of making the heads of all its cross-bred varieties so brittle that it is useless for breeding purposes." According to Professor Cherry, "the seeds drop from the heads as soon as they ripen in succession, and the grain remains enclosed in the glumes, which end in a very long beard. These peculiarities ensure the survival of the plant, but make it nearly impossible to harvest the crop. The same characteristics destroy the usefulness of the small wild barley (*Hordeum spontaneum*)."

Professor Cherry continues:

"The case is still more unfavourable to the claims of the wild wheat of Mesopotamia (*T. monococcum*) as the ancestor of the cultivated varieties. This is a true wheat, which grows as a grass

¹ Breasted, *Ancient Times* (1916), p. 108.

in tussocks. The straw is very slender, and the grains are small. Some 40 years ago, Hæckel proclaimed this as the original of our wheats, and this has become the current opinion on the matter. But it is found that *T. monococcum* will not cross with any of the cultivated varieties, so that the question of the descent of the latter from it can be definitely answered in the negative. This species will cross with Aaronsohn's wheat (Carmel wheat), but the resultant seed is sterile."

Barley, which, as indicated, was in the Nile valley naturally cultivated and developed by the Nile, has an awn, and this sharp point "makes it easier for the seed to bury itself, and it is some protection against the smaller birds". But wheat has no awn. The wild plant in Mesopotamia drops each seed, as has been shown, as soon as it ripens. The other wheat, the seeds of which grew large and remained in the ear, must have "evolved in some area not subject to the stress of the ordinary struggle for existence among plants". Professor Cherry finds such an area in the Cyclades. He favours an island like Delos where sea-birds bred and scared away small grain-eating birds and where there were no indigenous grain-eating mammals. "The island theory," he says, "will explain why wheat has increased the size and food value of the seed, but evolved no correlative protective mechanism against animal enemies." The island soil was rich in nitrates and phosphates, the climate was suitable for the evolution of wheat.¹

It may be that the Delos wheat was discovered by the early Egyptian seafaring prospectors, and that the seeds were introduced by them into their native land, where barley and millet were already being cultivated. The newly-discovered cereal was given an Egyptian name which was at a later period adopted in Sumeria when the seeds reached that country from Egypt.

¹ Cherry, *The Discovery of Agriculture*, pp. 17 et seq.

Nature, which taught the Egyptians how to grow barley, also taught them how to make bricks. Professor Sir W. F. Flinders Petrie writes in this connexion:

"Bricks are begun by Nature in Egypt. As the soil dries and cracks, large lumps can be lifted out, and are piled up in rough walls for cattle fences. Regular bricks were made in the later prehistoric period, used for lining graves, and for large constructions in the Ist Dynasty."¹

Nature suggested a connexion between gold and the moon. A twelfth-century Arab writer, alluding to the Wadi Allagi district in the Sudan, tells that the miners mark the scintillations of gold in the sand on moonlight nights, and take it and wash it by day, in wooden bowls, and sell it to the merchants.² Gold (*nub*) was connected with the goddess Hathor, who as Nubt was the female personification of that precious metal, the chief source of which, as has been indicated, was Nubia. She was a deity of the moon as well as of the sun. Gold was in consequence of its association with the goddess regarded as a "life-giver". An ingot of gold was found buried with a corpse in an early grave excavated by Mr. J. Quibell at El Kab, "while bracelets and ornaments of amethyst and turquoise mounted in wrought gold are ascribed to the Ist Dynasty". Gold was used in pre-Dynastic times to cover the handles of flint knives and the mouths of stone jars,³ and both the knives and jars were evidently designed for ceremonial use.

But while nature may have suggested to the Ancient Egyptians how to grow corn, to irrigate the desert, to make bricks and pottery, and to wash gold, they had to depend on their own resources to solve certain other problems. One was the safe crossing of the crocodile-haunted Nile.

¹ *Social Life in Ancient Egypt* (1923), p. 170.

² *Cairo Scientific Journal*, Vol. III, pp. 110 *et seq.*

³ *Ibid.*

The earliest contrivance used for this purpose was the reed float. Two fish-shaped bundles of papyrus reeds were tied together with ropes twisted from the reeds or from palm-fibre. From this float the first boat was developed. In an interesting tomb picture of the Pyramid Age three men are shown binding together a papyrus boat, the forepart of which suggests the lines of a fish, and the uplifted stern the hind part of a sea-bird. Evidently the inventor of the first boat had gone to nature for guidance. His discovery was of even more far-reaching importance in his day than that of how to make an aeroplane is in our own. Experimenting with such a light material as papyrus reeds, the Egyptian inventor solved the problem of how to make a boat remain upright in the water when he entered it. This invention dates back to the pre-Dynastic Age. That it was first forced upon early man by necessity, "the mother of invention", and especially for protection against crocodiles, is suggested by the Egyptian traditions preserved by classical writers. Plutarch refers to Isis searching for the body of the slain Osiris "through the fenny country, in a bark made of papyrus, whence it is supposed that persons using boats of this description are never attacked by crocodiles, out of fear and respect to the goddess." Boats were regarded as forms of the goddess, and were on that account of the female gender. Eyes were painted on the prows, and the lotus symbol of the deity was a prominent feature of vessels made of wood; it adorned the hook-like stem, a survival of the original cord-bound bundle of papyrus reeds. When the sail was introduced it was dedicated to the goddess Nut, the sky-form of Hathor.

After the Egyptians had made considerable progress in solving the problems of navigation with their papyri, and perhaps also with skin boats, they ventured forth from the calm waters of the Nile to explore the Mediterranean coasts. Timber was procured in Lebanon and floated in rafts to

Egypt. Then, apparently, the first "dug out" was fashioned in imitation of the reed boat which was called "To Bind" or "the Binding". It would appear, therefore, that early man never saw a boat in a tree until after the boats had been invented.

It has been suggested that the mast was first introduced on the Syrian coast, there being no trees in Egypt long enough or straight enough to be used as masts. But this view ignores the fact that in tomb pictures jointed yards can be detected. If yards were made of more than one piece, why not masts? It further ignores the fact that a mast is useless without a sail. Although straight trees grew on the Syrian coast, sails had to be manufactured, and there is no evidence that the Egyptians obtained sails from that region. Even the Phœnicians, as we gather from Ezekiel (xxvii, 7), did not manufacture sails for themselves:

"Fine linen with brodered work from Egypt was that which thou (Tyre) spreadest forth to be thy sail."

Apparently Egypt was the first manufacturer of sails of linen and papyrus.

The earliest masts were not straight nor single—a sure indication that they could not have been suggested by straight trees. As a matter of fact, single masts could not have been erected in the frail early boats before these were decked, and the masts required back-stays to prevent them being blown overboard in the gusty Mediterranean. A-shaped or bipod masts, which were attached to the bulwarks, were in use long before the single mast appeared on an Egyptian sea-going boat. The A-shaped masts had V-shaped sails during the Old Kingdom period.

The earliest known picture of a masted boat decorates an Ancient Egyptian amphora in the British Museum. This pre-Dynastic vessel has a square sail. The mast is a com-

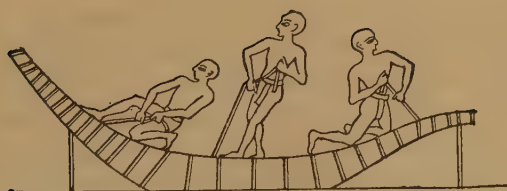
paratively low one; it is not so high as the raised prow. As a side-view is shown, it is uncertain whether the mast is single or double. The top of it, however, is V-shaped, and it may have been formed of reeds tied tightly together. The sail suggests a screen of papyrus reeds. Such a sail could be used only on the Nile and in the gentlest of winds. There are no indications of the use of back-stays to support the mast. Allowance must, of course, be made for the potter's possible ignorance of boats. But the later Egyptian method of depicting a "bunch" of back-stays, suggests that if the early boat had been fitted with them, so outstanding a feature could not have been ignored even by a potter.

It may be that the potter's boat illustrates the earliest method of fitting up a low mast with a broad sail—perhaps all in one piece. But where could experiments be made with early sails if not on the Nile? E. Keble Chatterton, writing in this connexion, emphasizes the suitability of Egypt for early experiments in navigation:

"The peacefulness of the waters of the Nile, the absence of storms and the rarity of calms, combined with the fact that, at any rate during the winter and early spring months, the gentle north wind blew up the river with the regularity of a trade wind, so enabling the ships to sail against the stream without the aid of oars—these were just the conditions that many another nation might have longed for. . . . It was but natural, therefore, that the Egyptians became great sailors and builders; we should have been surprised had the reverse been the case."¹

A great variety of vessels were invented after suitable wood was procured from a distance. "Dug out" canoes were replaced by clinker-built boats, but not until the copper saw had been improved and enlarged. The Egyptians, however, did not abandon the construction of the older types of vessels, which were quite suitable for the

¹ *Sailing Ships and their Story*, pp. 25, 26.



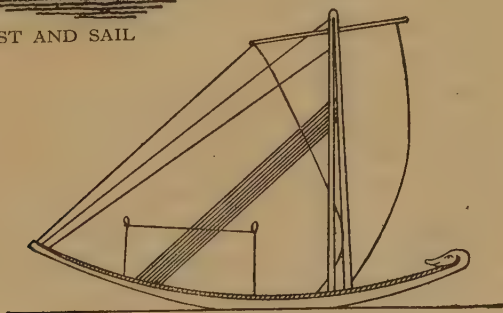
1. THE PAPYRUS BOAT BOUND TOGETHER



2. THE DUG-OUT



3. THE MAST AND SAIL



4. THE DOUBLE MAST WITH BACKSTAYS

Nile, although not for long and trying Mediterranean and Indian Ocean voyages. When Herodotus visited Egypt he found a variety of boats in use. Among those he describes is one with a mast of acantha wood and sails made of papyrus. He also saw rafts made of the wood of the tamarisk.¹ The reed floats referred to in the Pyramid Texts are still used by peasants in Middle and Upper Egypt.²

As copper played a prominent part in boat construction, and in bringing about the contact of peoples, its importance in the history of civilization cannot be over-emphasized. Its discovery was made in pre-Dynastic times and long after malachite came into use. Green malachite, an ore of copper, was worn by the early Egyptians as a life-giving amulet. Its reputation as a "life-giver" (health-protector and promoter) may have been originally due to its vivid and particular colour. When the Nile begins to rise in flood, it flows green for a few days, and the "Green Nile" brought new life to Egypt, and was supposed to colour vegetation green. The greenness of the rising Nile was regarded as the very essence of life. Malachite long retained in Egypt its ancient reputation as a "life-giver". The star and other gods of the sky-world were supposed to live in lakes of malachite—the sources of the celestial Nile, and therefore of the Nile of Egypt. In Pyramid Text 1784, the Pharaoh, after death, "eats" from "the lakes of malachite". The ore was thus reputed to be celestial food. In a solar Osirian chapter of the *Book of the Dead*, it is said of the deceased, "Brought to thee are blocks of silver and (masses) of malachite".³ Ground malachite was used by the living as an eyelid paint, and was, with ground hæmatite (an ore of iron), placed in the graves for the use of the pre-Dynastic Egyptian dead.

¹ Herodotus, Book II, Chap. 96.

² Breasted, *op. cit.*, 108, 158. ³ *Ibid.* *op. cit.*, p. 279.

After copper had been extracted from malachite it was regarded, at first, as a variety of gold. Perhaps green malachite was supposed to be connected with "green gold". The Egyptians found "green gold" in the wadis of Nubia. It is electrum—a natural alloy of gold and silver, the particular proportions of which give a green hue to the combined metals. Mines of electrum are mentioned in the texts of the XIXth Dynasty. It may be that the early finds of "green gold" aroused the curiosity of the Egyptians regarding the composition of malachite, with the result that copper was discovered. Or, perhaps, malachite and "green gold" were occasionally smelted together. An inferior gold would, of course, be the result. But once malachite was found to be an ore, its separate smelting became inevitable, for the early metal-workers were continually making experiments.

According to a writer in the *Cairo Scientific Journal*,¹ the Egyptian records refer to four kinds of gold—"gold of the balance, best gold, gold of second quality, and white gold or electrum."² . . . Green gold is also mentioned and gold of two times and gold of three times, but these latter are probably different translations of second quality and best gold."

Berthelot has emphasized the skill displayed by the early Egyptians as miners and metallurgists. Dealing with the exploitation of copper deposits in Sinai he shows, as Professor Breasted says, "how interesting it is that probably at the beginning of the exploitation of these mines, . . . that is, over six thousand years ago, by an empiricism the origin of which is easy to conceive, man had already gained the processes for smelting metal, which have been followed ever since even down into our own day. Only recently have

¹ Vol. III, pp. 110 *et seq.*

² The colours of electrum depend on the proportions of gold and silver.

the metallurgical chemists succeeded in devising processes more successful and efficient than those which were first devised in Sinai over six thousand years ago.”¹

It was evidently because the Egyptians became, in pre-Dynastic times, accustomed to the use of metals and of precious and semi-precious stones to which a religious value had been attached, that they took a very special interest in the ores and stones discovered by prospectors who visited other countries.

The early seafarers who in Naxos discovered emery, which was used for polishing stone vessels and stone implements, in Melos discovered obsidian, and in Delos discovered wheat, may have been also the discoverers of copper in Cyprus and Crete. The searchers for metals may have likewise been the first Egyptians to discover the great cedars of Lebanon.

The invention of the boat, which facilitated the movements of the pioneers of civilization, was of far-reaching importance in early times. It transformed the Nile into a great waterway and made it possible for the central government to control Egypt so that the irrigation system might be maintained; it also opened up the world to prospectors and explorers. The sea was less a hindrance to early enterprising adventurers than were deserts and mountain ranges, and the deep forests and valleys haunted by beasts of prey. Contact between widely-separated peoples was more easily effected by mariners than by travellers on land. It should not therefore surprise us to find that the earliest civilized communities came into existence along the sea coasts. Eridu, the “sea-port”, was the most ancient city in Mesopotamia; the earliest civilizations in Europe grew up on the island of Crete, in the Cyclades, on the shorelands of

¹ Berthelot, “Sur les mines de cuivre du Sinai”, *Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Sciences*, 19th August, 1896, and Breasted, *The Origins of Civilization*, pp. 563-4.



EGYPTIANS IN PAPYRUS CANOES FISHING

A model made about 2000 B.C. and recently discovered in a rock-chamber near Thebes.
Reproduced by courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



PHŒNICIAN TRADING SHIP

A relief in the Louvre, Paris, after a relief on a sarcophagus found at Sidon in 1914.

Greece and in isolated Malta. Troy at the mouth of the Dardanelles was an early seat of maritime commerce in Anatolia: it dominated trade routes after these became possible as a result of the formation of trading colonies which supplied established markets. Phœnicia owed its rise in the first place to the early Egyptian timber traders. The harbours of Spain were visited by civilized peoples before the inhabitants of Central Europe had emerged from the hunting stage. Britain was reached at an early period—earlier than used to be thought—by civilized peoples who had taken to seafaring.

As Professor Breasted reminds us, the ships of the Egyptians depicted in the Abusir pyramids and temples “carried Egyptian influences across the Mediterranean. . . . When the Mediterranean peoples, like the Phœnicians, afterwards likewise took to the sea, their ships were reproductions of these Egyptian vessels. It is therefore evident that the Egyptian sailing ships which crossed the Mediterranean at the beginning of the Pyramid Age, as early as the thirtieth century B.C., were not only the first sea-going ships devised by man, but were likewise the ancestors of all salt-water craft of the early world, and hence of the modern world also. The native shipping of East Indian waters to this day exhibits details and characteristics which are of unmistakable Ancient Egyptian origin.”¹

¹ J. H. Breasted, *The Origins of Civilization* in *The Scientific Monthly*, 1919-20, p. 105 of reprint. See also G. Elliot Smith's *Ships as Evidence of the Migrations of Early Culture*; Holme's *Ancient and Modern Ships*; E. K. Chatterton's *Sailing Ships and their Story*; Warrington Smith's *Mast and Sail in Europe and Asia*, &c.

CHAPTER II

Early Explorers and Conquerors

Union of Upper and Lower Egypt—The Delta Problem—Gold, Copper, and Iron in use in pre-Dynastic Times—Copper of Sinai—Bronze in Egypt—Where was Tin first worked?—Khorassan and Spain—Early Race Movements—Anau and Egypt—Origin of the Kingship—Origin of Dual Organization—" Culture Drifting ".

The chief political event in the early history of Ancient Egypt was the union of the " Two Lands "—Upper and Lower Egypt—under one king, the traditional Mena, the founder of the Ist Dynasty. During a pre-Dynastic period of uncertain length considerable progress had been achieved in the arts and crafts. The lunar calendar was introduced in Lower Egypt, the Delta area, about 4241 B.C. or 4328 B.C. Archæology has, however, failed to throw much light on Lower Egyptian pre-Dynastic history. It is not known with certainty whether or not its inhabitants spoke the same language as the early Dynastic Egyptians. Perhaps, like the Basques of the Pyrenees, who are regarded as, in part, the descendants of an " early wave " of the Mediterranean race (the " Brown race " of Elliot Smith), they spoke an agglutinative language, or sections of them acquired such a language from the broad-headed intruders who began to " drift " into Lower Egypt during the Middle pre-Dynastic period. These intruders appear to have been attracted to Egypt after the introduction of the agricultural mode of life and in consequence, apparently, of

the seafaring activities of the early Egyptian mariners. The aboriginal inhabitants of the Nile valley and Delta area were representatives of the Mediterranean or Brown race.

During the middle pre-Dynastic period gold, copper, and iron came into use in Upper Egypt. In two tombs near Medum beads of hammered iron have been discovered. As the iron beads were in one instance strung alternately with beads of gold, it would appear that iron had already acquired an arbitrary religious value. In the religious texts of the Dynastic period iron is referred to as "the metal of heaven". No doubt aerolites were picked up, but it does not necessarily follow that the early Egyptians were aware that these had fallen from the sky. Gold was likewise connected with the sky on account of its having been associated with the mother goddess Hathor who, after the introduction of the solar calendar, became the goddess of the sun and the heavens. The pre-Dynastic Egyptians used hæmatite (an ore of iron) as an eyelid paint, and it is quite possible that the discovery of iron was made by accident. The potters used powdered hæmatite in the manufacture of black-topped wares, and it may be that during the baking process small quantities of iron emerged.

The Egyptians, however, made little use of iron. Copper was found to be obtainable in larger quantities, and it was more easily worked. Withal, the copper of Egypt and Sinai is naturally hard—almost as hard as some earlier varieties of manufactured bronze (an alloy of copper and tin). Bronze did not come into use in Egypt until about the Vth Dynasty (c. 2750 B.C.), and it was rare. For about 2000 years the naturally hard copper was found to be sufficient for Egyptian needs, except, apparently, for weapons. The softer copper of Persia and Armenia was at an early period hardened by an admixture of tin. There are differences of opinion as to where tin was first obtained. One view is that it was

first worked at Khorassan, in Persia, where it is said to have been found near deposits of copper. Another view, urged by Professor Sayce, is that tin was carried from Spain to Asia Minor as far back as 2800 B.C. Sayce has found references in Mesopotamian tablets to "Ku-ki" (Tin Land) situated "beyond the Upper (Western) Sea (the Mediterranean)". Bronze came into general use at Troy and in Crete at an earlier period than in Egypt. The Cretans appear to have had trading connections with Anatolia and to have penetrated, perhaps by way of the Black Sea, to the Caspian area.

The idea, which has found favour in some quarters, that various peoples in a thinly-peopled world began spontaneously to work metals is one that can be sharply questioned and certainly cannot be proved. In all "prehistoric" sites, where traces of early metal-working have been unearthed, it is found that agriculture was practised. As is shown in the previous chapter, the early agriculturists were the pioneers of civilization. They discovered how to render habitable some areas which offered few attractions to hunters and fishermen, and their migrations, impelled by necessity, brought them into touch with peoples of different racial origin who gradually adopted the new mode of life. The broad-headed aliens who drifted into Egypt in pre-Dynastic times must either have crossed the sea or undertaken the perilous journey across the desert of Sinai, which must have for long been a formidable barrier to hunters. There must surely have been a psychological motive for this racial drift, and it is discovered when one realizes that the agricultural mode of life originated in Ancient Egypt, and that its early prospectors sowed the seeds of the new civilization in other lands which they found it necessary to visit.

"Originality," writes Laufer, dealing with the early search for jade, "is certainly the rarest thing in this world, and in

the history of mankind the original thoughts are appallingly sparse. There is, in the light of historical facts and experiences, no reason to credit the prehistoric and early historic populations of Europe with any spontaneous ideas relative to jade; they received these, as everything else, from an outside source; they gradually learned to appreciate the value of this tough and compact substance, and then set to hunting for natural supplies." In like manner the early inhabitants of Syria, Anatolia, and Mesopotamia appear to have acquired from an outside source the seeds of cultivated barley and the knowledge of how to till the soil and raise crops, as well as the knowledge of how to work copper. The search for precious metals and precious stones appears, however, to have preceded the search for copper. In Egypt, as has been indicated, a magico-religious value had been attached to gold and also to turquoise, both of which were connected with the mother goddess. The "Kurgan"¹ peoples of Central Asia searched for and found turquoise, and it is unlikely that they had developed spontaneous ideas relative to turquoise or to gold. It is more probable that, like the early searchers for jade, they acquired their interest in turquoise and gold from an outside source. The prospectors and colonists who introduced the Egyptian agricultural mode of life into Western Asia appear to have introduced at the same time the complex culture which had grown up in the Nile valley. Small bands of energetic intruders influenced the peoples of large areas, the populations of which increased rapidly after the agricultural mode of life had been adopted. Not by fragments of pottery alone, but also by "fragments" of a system of superstitious beliefs and practices can the early cultural and racial "drifts" be traced.²

¹ "Kurgan" means a burial mound, and was applied by natives to the mysterious mounds which, excavators found, contained relics of ancient civilization.

² See Chapter XI.

The increasing population of Egypt necessitated, as has been indicated, the introduction of systems of laws. Before the dawn of the Dynastic period the kingship had come into existence, and it was closely connected with agriculture, and therefore with the Nile. Osiris, an early king, was worshipped after death as a god and was supposed to control the Nile in the Otherworld. This Otherworld was situated under the earth, whence the Nile was supposed to flow.¹ The beliefs connected with Osiris became fused in time with those connected with the mother goddess who had been associated with magical shells, gold, malachite, turquoise, and with the "milk-yielding" sycamore and the cow. Osiris was regarded as the son of the goddess. He controlled, as king, her human children, directing their energies as agriculturists, craftsmen, &c., and his association with her led to the idea that he controlled her river. The sun-cult, which had been introduced at Heliopolis, influenced other cults, and in Upper Egypt was fused with the cult of the Horus falcon. When the "Two Lands" were united by conquest, the process of cult fusion became general. It was essentially of arbitrary character, reflecting, as it did, political changes. The complex beliefs associated with the various religious centres were not evolved "naturally". The complexes have a definite history in a definite area of origin.

After Mena, the traditional conqueror of Lower Egypt, had established his sway over the "Two Lands", he became the ruler of a dual kingdom. The Pharaoh had a dual crown—the united crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt; he had also a dual palace and his high officials were often appointed in pairs. Religion was thus influenced by the union of the "Two Lands". There were two Hapi gods of the Nile, two goddesses representing Upper and Lower Egypt, dual

¹ The solar cult believed the Nile flowed from the sky, and the Osirian cult that it rose from the Underworld.

temples, &c. The cow of the mother goddess was given two heads and so was her serpent, and the animal symbols of the "Two Lands" were placed in heraldic opposition and separated by the sun-disc pillar, bush, or tree symbol of the deity. Ultimately the double-headed and heraldically opposed animals and reptiles were adopted in other lands as religious symbols. But Egypt is the only country in the world in which the history of these symbols can be traced. They were gradually introduced far beyond the area directly influenced by Egypt, and they survive till our own day in coats of arms and as national symbols like the double-headed eagle, &c. These, and the Egyptian calendar now in use all over the world, are memorials of the early rise and growth of civilization in the Nile valley.

CHAPTER III

Egypt's Old Kingdom

Egyptians in Crete—The Obsidian Clue—Ancient Cyprus—Egyptian Relations with Caspian Area—Turquoise and Lapis-lazuli—Ebony and Ivory from Upper Nile—The “Life-givers” of Punt—The Earthly Paradise—Polished Stone Hammers—Use of these by Boat-builders—Copper for Weapons—Early Stone-workers—Tombs and Temples—Superstitions regarding Stone—Trading Expeditions—Pyramid Age Culture Fusion—The two Paradises.

When the “Two Lands” were united under a central government, there was already a flourishing civilization in Egypt. Even before the Ist Dynasty was established there had been important political developments which, however, remain obscure. A kingdom in Middle Egypt had extended its sway towards the south as well as the north, and even before the rival kingdom of the Delta area had been completely absorbed the dual system had come into existence. Outside Egypt the “leaven” of its civilization had influenced more than one area. Colonies of Egyptians, including a sprinkling of aliens of Armenoid type, had settled in Crete. Perhaps there was an exodus from the Delta area after the conquest, but the island received colonists from Egypt at an earlier period. Stone bowls, palettes, and seal-stones discovered on Cretan sites betray Egyptian pre-Dynastic and early Dynastic cultural contact, while the burial customs and the evidence afforded by skulls testify to the racial connexion. Of special interest is the obsidian clue. Black obsidian was imported from the island of Melos, but appa-

rently those who utilized it had previously been acquainted with this "natural glass". A pale grey obsidian found in Africa and Asia Minor had been carried to Crete, and specimens have been unearthed at Messara and Knossos.

Cyprus was similarly influenced by Egypt. On that island cereals were cultivated, and sheep and cattle reared, while a red pottery of Egyptian technique was manufactured. Certain copper implements which were in use were undoubtedly of Egyptian origin. Apparently the Egyptians exploited the mineral wealth of the island, drawing from it part of their supplies of copper.

The long arm of Egyptian culture appears to have reached even the Caspian area. At Anau a red pottery was manufactured, and cultivated cereals were in use. Of special importance is the fact that turquoise, carnelian, and lapis-lazuli were at Anau given a religious value and were used for charms. The turquoise must have been obtained either from Siberia or from Sinai. As the Egyptians obtained lapis-lazuli from the Caspian area in pre-Dynastic times, it may well be that Egypt was the source of the supplies of turquoise found at Anau. The Egyptians worked the turquoise mines in Wadi Maghara and Wadi Sidreh in Sinai. They connected turquoise with their mother goddess, Hathor, and with the sky, and the boat of the sun-god was supposed to sail daily in "the waters of turquoises". Neither the Sumerians nor later Babylonians favoured turquoise as did the Egyptians and the early settlers at Anau. Turquoise was, however, subsequently appreciated in Siberia, where it was used by the manufacturers of bronze, and it was in time regarded in Tibet as the most sacred of stones and was offered, with gold, to the gods. It is possible that the early Egyptian prospectors who searched for gold, the sacred metal, and for precious stones, which were also sacred, introduced into Anau the beliefs con-

nected with turquoise which were subsequently carried into Siberia and at a later period into Tibet.

The statement has often been made that the Egyptians were a secluded and home-staying people. This may apply to the great masses of the population engaged in agriculture, but from an early period it would appear that Egypt had its enterprising groups of prospectors and explorers. The Red Sea, it must be remembered, was visited in pre-Dynastic times, as the shell amulets found in graves testify; and, as has been indicated, the shell-gatherers were probably the first to utilize gold. In early Dynastic times, ebony and ivory were imported from the land of the Upper Nile. Then ultimately the expeditions reached Punt (Somaliland). During the early Dynasties, the traders came into touch with the pygmies of Central and East Africa. Punt (God's Land) was regarded by the Dynastic Egyptians as the land of their ancestors. After the custom of reanimating mummies and the complex beliefs connected with this peculiarly Egyptian practice came into existence, ships were sent down the Red Sea to Punt to obtain the fragrant gums and resins and the aromatic woods used for incense when mummies were being reanimated, and for use in the temples: even the gods were supposed to require reanimating incense. Panther skins worn by the priests, gold, including "green gold", baboons, staves of sacred wood for ceremonial use, &c., were also obtained from Punt. A tomb record of the VIth Dynasty refers to an official's eleven visits to that sacred land.

It was probably as a result of these visits to Punt—the "Land of the Fathers", the Earthly Paradise which contained "life-givers"—that the Egyptians acquired knowledge of the habits of the serpent-slaying secretary bird, and saw the long-necked giraffes, in "heraldic opposition", cropping the upper leaves of the thorny trees on

which they feed.¹ The stories told of the exploits of the secretary bird became incorporated in the Horus-Set myth, the tree-cropping animals were incorporated in the symbolism of the dual kingdom, and the baboons were identified with the god Thoth.

It is possible, however, to over-emphasize the importance of metal-working in connexion with the progress achieved in the arts and crafts. For a long period after copper had been discovered, flint and stone implements were manufactured, and were in daily use. Indeed, it was not until the XVIIIth Dynasty (c. 1580 B.C.) that stone implements were abandoned. The wonderful Nubian stone adzes, polished with the aid of emery from Naxos, may have, to begin with, been imitations of copper axes and may have come into use because copper was dear. They could be utilized with skill even in boat-building. The Polynesians, until comparatively recently, preferred stone to steel adzes when doing delicate work on their canoes. "In watching the shaping of a canoe," writes Mr. Brigham, in his monograph on Hawaiian stone implements, "I have seen the old canoe-maker use for the rough shaping and excavating, an ordinary foreign steel adze; but for the finishing touches he dropped the foreign tool and returned to the adze of his ancestors, and the blunt-looking stone cut off a delicate shaving from the very hard *Koa* wood, and never seemed to take too much wood, as the foreign adze was apt to do. That skill was an important element in the use I was convinced, for, with all the teaching of the native, I could only make a dent when I tried to raise a shaving."

Copper weapons were, however, greatly superior to those of stone, and it may be that the early dynastic conquerors achieved their successes in organized warfare

¹ There are indications, however, that the range of the giraffe extended farther northward in pre-Dynastic times.

because they were better armed, as well as better disciplined, than those whom they overcame. The later bronze weapons undoubtedly played an important part in warfare.

With the introduction of copper implements, the sculptor's art was advanced and hieroglyphic texts could be carved on the hardest stone. But "rock-hewn tombs" were hollowed out with the aid of stone hammers. The hardest granite was quarried by building fires and then pouring water on the heated stone so as to break it up, and by boring holes and inserting wedges to split it. Balls of hard dolerite were used for top-dressing. Limestone was quarried before granite and was dressed with hammers. In the IInd Dynasty a tomb chamber, which still survives, was constructed for the body of King Khasekhemui. The skill displayed indicates that the builders had already acquired some considerable experience in quarrying and in dressing limestone. It is unnecessary, however, to assume that a long period should be allowed for development in this connexion. We are dealing with a period when inventors were busy, and when as rapid progress was achieved as during the latter half of the nineteenth century of our own era, which witnessed an extraordinary industrial revolution in consequence of the introduction of steam-driven machinery. The Egyptians certainly made rapid progress in stone building. During the reign of King Zoser (IIIrd Dynasty), the son of King Khasekhemui, the first pyramid was erected—the "step pyramid" of Sakkarah. This was an amazing advance on the simple tomb chamber of stone. The architect, according to Egyptian tradition, was a genius named Imhotep, who was subsequently deified as the son of Ptah, the artisan god of Memphis. He founded the "school" of stone builders whose early triumphs are the great pyramids of the Vth Dynasty near Cairo. Temples

of stone were erected as early as the IVth and, perhaps, as the IIIrd Dynasty.

Before the Egyptians began to provide stone "houses" (tombs) for the Pharaohs and stone houses (temples) for the gods, they carved ivory and stone heads of kings and deities. Limestone heads of a Ist Dynasty king, and of King Khasekhemui of the IInd Dynasty, have been discovered. Wooden statues which are fine studies in portraiture were produced in the IIIrd and IVth Dynasties. An exquisite and small head in ivory of King Khufu (Cheops) of the Pyramid Age is a supreme work of art. But one of the finest productions of the period, and, indeed, of Ancient Egyptian art, is the magnificent statue in diorite of King Khafra, son of Khufu, an outstanding symbol of his splendid age and of Egyptian civilization.

The extraordinary progress achieved in the arts and crafts during the early dynasties of Egyptian history was, as has been emphasized, a direct result of the introduction of the agricultural mode of life, but the psychological motives which prompted the erection of pyramids and temples and the carving of statues were rooted in a mass of religious beliefs which were already of complex character. Curious ideas had arisen with regard to stone. When, as has been shown, the bodies of the dead were buried in the hot, dry sands of Upper Egypt they were naturally mummified, but after the custom arose of building tombs, the discovery was made that in these the flesh of the dead decayed. It was supposed that the stone "ate" the dead, and that consequently the "ghost" entered the stone.¹ The sculptors therefore had to provide statues of the deceased so that the "ghost" might have an enduring body. In this way a great art was fostered. At the same time, attempts were made to preserve the body, and these ultimately culminated in the

¹ Sarcophagus means "flesh eater".

successful practice of mummification. Then apparently the belief in twin souls came into existence. From the science of mummification that of modern surgery was in time developed by the Greeks. It was, no doubt, in consequence of the strange beliefs connected with stone as an "eater" of flesh that temples and tombs of stone were erected, and not merely because stone is more enduring than brick. Stone was, as a "flesh-eater", a "life taker"; it took what it gave and was therefore a "life giver", according to the Egyptian way of thinking.

It was similarly because a religious value was attached to such a useless metal as gold and to pearls and gems that these were searched for far and wide. The Egyptian prospectors and mariners who visited foreign lands to procure wood and other materials, were, like the temple- and pyramid-builders, engaged to obtain these mainly for religious purposes. They were not traders in the ordinary sense of the term. Trade routes did not come into existence until civilization had become widespread and one state could offer goods in exchange for the goods of another. The early Egyptians dispatched expeditions across the Mediterranean, to Sinai and down the Red Sea, to obtain the various articles they required. King Snefru of the IIIrd Dynasty dispatched in the thirtieth century B.C. to Phœnicia a fleet of forty vessels to obtain cedar from Lebanon, and like Zoser, the builder of the first pyramid, invaded Nubia for slaves, his expedition bringing back no fewer than 7000. King Sahure of the Vth Dynasty dispatched a fleet to Punt.

During the Pyramid period of the Old Kingdom, which embraces roughly about 800 years, the beliefs and customs of the Ancient Egyptians were given expression in the Pyramid Texts. The earliest of these date from the reign of King Unis, the last monarch of the Vth Dynasty, who reigned in the latter part of the twenty-seventh century

B.C. Although they deal mainly with the beliefs and funerary ritual of the sun-worshippers, they bear evidence of the fusion of rival cults, and especially that of the Cult of the East (the sun cult) with the Cult of the West (the Osirian cult). Although the East is favoured as the most sacred region, the dead, in one passage, "is adjured to go to the West in preference to the East, in order to join the sun-god." A compromise is effected in the text in which King Unis "rests from life (dies) in the West", and "dawns anew in the East."¹

Osiris, as has been stated, was a deified king who after death became ruler of the dead in an underworld agricultural paradise, and he was credited with controlling the Nile. In one text, indeed, Horus identifies Osiris with the "new water" (the Green Nile). The green colour of the Nile, noticeable during the first three or four days of its rise in flood, was apparently attributed to the presence in the river of the "life substance" of the dead man-god.

As the "new water", Osiris was a "life giver". The living Horus, the sun-god, was his representative on earth. Each Pharaoh was supposed to be an incarnation of Horus; after death he became an Osiris. The sun and the river Nile were thus connected as a result of the arbitrary fusion of rival cults—a fusion which had a political as well as a religious significance.

As the success of agricultural operations in the Nile valley depended on the strict observance of the laws of Nature, and on the laws of man which were based on Nature's laws, the King (Pharaoh), as head of the social organization, was credited with the success of agricultural operations. The kingship had thus from the beginning a religious character. Each Pharaoh was a god and the son of the dead god who had merged in Osiris, the introducer of the agricultural mode of

¹ Breasted, *Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, p. 100.

life. He was the giver of great Niles and of the harvest; he was the " giver of life " and the means by which life was sustained.

The sun-worshipping cult achieved political ascendancy during the Vth Dynasty when the Pharaoh became " son of the sun ". The various cults in Egypt were then, as has been indicated, gradually solarized. The arbitrary fusion of the cult of Osiris and the cult of Ra (or Re) left its impress on the subsequent religious doctrines of Ancient Egypt, and when the elements of Egyptian civilization were introduced into other lands, the complex beliefs which had origin in Egypt were introduced with them. If it is argued that the complexes, similar to those of Egypt, which are detected in the religious systems of various lands, must have been of independent origin, it is necessary to support such an hypothesis and render it plausible by showing that these complexes were products of the same natural conditions as obtain in Egypt, and of similar fortuitous political happenings as took place in Egypt. Wherever, for instance, the " flying disc " symbol of the Egyptian Horus is found, it must be shown, if the theory of independent origin is insisted upon, that the sun cult was blended with a cult of the falcon, as a result of political fusion, and that the combined cults of the sun and falcon became fused, as a result of further political happenings, with that of the god of the Underworld (Osiris) who became associated with a river which taught men how to grow crops and adopt a new mode of life.

In dealing with the early history of civilization, the myths and religious practices are found to be of profound importance. They reflect the experiences of the founders of a new mode of life and supply the motives that impelled the early craftsmen to undertake the laborious task of quarrying and working stone. A pyramid is not merely a monument to the Ancient Egyptian's skill as an architect, builder,

craftsman, and organizer of labour, but also to his activities as a thinker who attempted to solve the riddle of life. A pyramid is, withal, an enlarged *ben-ben* symbol of the sun cult of Heliopolis, and therefore a memorial of the introduction of the solar calendar. The king interred in a pyramid was supposed to be transferred to the sky-world, while his subjects who were interred in mastabas and other underground tombs were supposed to enter the underground paradise of Osiris. Ultimately the two paradises were fused by the theorizing priests of Egypt, and, with them, a mass of contradictory beliefs. The resulting confusion can be traced in more than one mythology which has at some period been influenced by the strange conceptions that emanated in ancient times, with so much else, from the land of the Pharaohs.

CHAPTER IV

Egypt's Golden Age

Political Ascendancy of Sun Cult—Royal Sons of the Sun—Pyramid-building—The Priest Kings—Lords of the Feudal Age—Middle Kingdom Pharaohs—Reorganization of Egypt—Brilliant XIIth Dynasty—Tomb-robbers—The Dashur Jewellery—Masterpieces of Art—Tomb Pictures and Models.

For about four and a half centuries after the Mena conquest of Lower Egypt, the capital of the "Two Lands" was the city of Memphis, of which Ptah, the artisan god, was the chief deity. Ptah had already been fused with Osiris, the dead king-god who ruled over his underworld paradise and controlled the Nile. Merchant princes, captains of industry, and war lords had risen into prominence. Then the supremacy of the old ruling class was threatened by the priests. The sun cult which had arisen in Heliopolis, the Oxford or Cambridge of Egypt, after the introduction of the solar calendar, gradually achieved an intellectual conquest of the conquerors. A new god named Ra or Re, a personification of the sun, came into prominence. He was proclaimed as the ruler of the sky-world—the Pharaoh of heaven, and the Pharaoh of Egypt was declared to be his representative among men.

The first king who appears to have been converted by the sun-worshippers was Zoser of the IIIrd Dynasty who, according to the minimum system of dating, came to the throne about 2980 B.C. He erected the first pyramid—that

is, the first tomb-symbol of solar theology. By the time of the Vth Dynasty the priestly class had deposed the old ruling class and seized the throne. The hereditary chief priest of Heliopolis became the Pharaoh, and the hereditary chief priest of Memphis became the vizier. Ptah, the artisan god, had meantime acquired solar attributes. In the various nomes or provinces of Egypt the office of governor became hereditary, as did that of the Pharaoh and the vizier. The various nome gods were solarized, and as the Pharaoh was regarded as "Son of the Sun", the god Ra was recognized as the divine Pharaoh of the various pantheons. The solarizing process was therefore not only a doctrinal but a political one. Hereditary succession had, to begin with, a religious significance.

The organization of Egypt on a basis of hereditary succession was accompanied by great industrial activity. Pyramid-building imposed an immense burden on the people. The resources of Egypt were entirely under the control of the centralized power of the Pharaohs, and were severely drawn upon to provide tombs and temples for these great and tyrannical dignitaries. Khufu's pyramid, according to Petrie, contains about two million three thousand stones, each averaging two and a half tons in weight. There must have been in existence a system of conscripting labour, while, as has been noted, prisoners of war were enslaved.

When, in the Vth Dynasty, the priestly class seized the throne, two interesting facts are found to emerge. The pyramids are less imposing and the official class comes more into prominence. The provincial governors became "great lords", and achieved a degree of independence which was strengthened by the hereditary system of succession. Their descendants, not being dependent on the Pharaoh for their positions in life, acted as did the turbulent barons in England and Scotland when they came into conflict with their

kings. Ultimately they sapped the centralized power of the Pharaohs and introduced what is generally referred to as the " Feudal Age ".

It was chiefly in the south that the nome lords began to regard themselves as petty kings. They had their own courts of justice, their own officials, treasuries and store-houses, their own fleets and militia. Ultimately civil war broke out, the Pharaohs being no longer strong enough to force the obedience of the lords, who appear to have formed alliances to maintain their privileges.

A new dynasty was established at Heracleopolis, to the south of the Fayum, and some of its Pharaohs exercised ephemeral authority over the south as well as the north, having, no doubt, arranged terms of peace. But ultimately the control of Upper Egypt passed to a family which had established its power at Thebes. Eighteen Heracleopolitans had ruled as Pharaohs during the IXth and Xth Dynasties, which lasted for over 280 years in all. Then the Middle Kingdom period, during which the feudal system was broken up, was inaugurated. For over a century and a half the Thebans of the XIth Dynasty held sway over the greater part of Egypt, but it was not until the establishment of the XIIth Dynasty, which began with Amenemhet I, that the Pharaohs were once again recognized as the supreme monarchs of a united Egypt.

With this restoration of centralized government came renewed activity in building. Temples were erected and pyramids of brick provided for the Pharaohs. It is significant to note, however, that it was found necessary to build strong fortifications at Dashur, in Middle Egypt, where the Pharaohs resided.

Amenemhet was a conqueror. He waged war against the Nubians, imposed his will upon the nome lords, cleared the eastern desert of Asiatic intruders, and crippled the growing

power of the Libyans. Egypt had suffered greatly in consequence of the internal dissensions that had prevailed for a prolonged period, and the need had undoubtedly arisen for a strong centralized government. Amenemhet promoted agriculture, and in a literary production of his age he is made to say:

I loved the corn-god. I have grown the grain
In every golden valley where the Nile
Entreated me: none hungered in my day. . . .

Lo! I have set in order all the land.
From Elephantine adown the Nile
I swept in triumph.

His son Senusert, and the immediate successors of that monarch, gradually broke up the feudal system, and the title "Great lord", which had been assumed by the nome lords, passed out of use. Men of humble origin were raised to high rank. The power of the Pharaoh was then more securely established, and the country was divided for purposes of administration into three parts—the North, Middle, and South. The ruler of a city became responsible for its good government to the district representative of the central power.

During the XIIth Dynasty the irrigation system was greatly extended. The sagacious policy of enriching Egypt by increasing production culminated in the construction, in the Fayum, of Lake Mœris, which was utilized, as is the modern Assouan barrage, to store and provide water for agricultural purposes. During the inundation period the Nile flooded this area, and embankments were erected to conserve the supply of water and render it available for irrigation. This work was completed by Amenemhet III, during whose reign the retention wall was extended until

its entire length was nearly 30 miles. It has been calculated by Major R. H. Brown, that this scheme of irrigation caused the reclamation of about 27,000 acres. Sufficient water appears to have been accumulated to double the volume of the river below the Fayum during the hot season—the period of the Low Nile.

The predecessor of Amenemhet III was Senusert III, who is believed to have been the prototype of the great Sesostris of Greek tradition, to whose memory, however, were attached some of the military exploits of the conquering Pharaohs of the XVIIIth and XIXth Dynasties. He waged war against the Nubians and invaded southern Palestine, where he won a victory. A stele of this warrior-king has been discovered at Gezer. Some of the buildings of the Middle Kingdom have survived in fragmentary form, but the greater number of them have long since perished. Although the royal pyramids were brick erections, great ingenuity was displayed in constructing the tomb chambers so as to prevent them being plundered. But the tomb-robbers of antiquity were so persistent and so thorough in their methods that little escaped them. Fortunately, however, there are art relics of the brilliant Middle Kingdom, the “Golden Age” of Ancient Egypt, which have survived till our own day. The graves of two of the court ladies of the Sesostris period have yielded the famous Dashur jewellery preserved in the Cairo Museum. Two gold diadems are notable memorials of the artistic craftsmanship of this, the Golden Age. One is of floral design with gold petals, lapis-lazuli berries, and shapely Maltese Crosses; the other is an artistic grouping of U-shaped and circular symbols, the former being apparently mother-goddess and the latter sun symbols. Other relics include gold pectorals with bird and sphinx symbols of the “Two Lands” placed in heraldic opposition, inlaid scarabs,

bracelets, &c. The sculpture work reached a high degree of excellence. A masterpiece of the period is the obsidian head of Amenemhet III, which is one of the finest examples of the sculptor's art ever discovered in Egypt. (See Frontispiece.) Other fine studies of this king have survived. Senusert III, the conqueror, is represented by portraits sculptured at different periods of his life, and no fewer than ten limestone statues of Amenemhet I were found in his pyramid.

In the pyramid tomb chambers of the Pharaohs and the rock-hewn tombs of the lords, scenes of daily life were depicted in reliefs and paintings, while models of workers were constructed and placed in the rooms of "toy" houses, barns, and granaries, so that they might be duplicated in the Otherworld for the service of their lord and master.

CHAPTER V

Hyksos and Empire Ages

Hyksos Conquerors of Egypt—Phœnicians, Aryans, and Bedouins—Horsed Chariot introduced into Egypt—Oppression of the Egyptians—Expulsion of Asiatics—The XVIIIth Dynasty—Two Centuries of Progress—A Famous Queen—The Napoleon of Egypt—Egyptian Empire in Asia—The Tell-el-Amarna Tablets—Rise of the Hittites—Akhenaton and Tutankhamon—The XIXth Dynasty—The Struggle in Syria—Famous Battle of Rameses II—Egypt's Treaty with the Hittites.

The Middle Kingdom period came to an end in obscurity and confusion. A weak Pharaoh succeeded Amenemhet III, and he was followed in turn by a queen who worshipped the crocodile-god Sebek, as her name Sebeknefrure reveals. The XIIIth Dynasty was established in the north, but appears to have been ignored at Thebes (Karnak) in the south. Civil war broke out and Egypt was again divided against itself. In time the XIVth Dynasty was inaugurated by a northern ruler. Little is known regarding it. During this Dynasty Lower Egypt was invaded by Asiatics who were remembered as the Hyksos, a name translated by Manetho, quoted by Josephus, as "Shepherd Kings" and by Dr. H. R. Hall as "Princes of the Desert", while Professor Breasted suggests that "Hyksos is a not improbable Greek spelling for the Egyptian title 'Ruler of Countries'." Manetho also called them Phœnicians. Contemporary Egyptian inscriptions refer to them as "Asiatics" and "barbarians" as well as by the name later rendered

“Hyksos”. Complete lists of the kings of their two Dynasties, the XVth and XVIth, have not survived, but some had Semitic names, one of special interest being Jacob-el. Two prominent Hyksos Pharaohs’ names were Apophis (Apopi) and Khian. The latter may have been an Aryan name.

The Hyksos conquerors of Egypt were evidently experienced warriors. They appear to have been better armed than the Egyptians, and to have introduced the domesticated horse and the chariot. So far as can be ascertained, their conquest was connected with the prevailing unrest in Western Asia. The Hittites had raided Babylonia and the Kassites, a people of Aryan speech, had seized the throne of the Hammurabi kings. In northern Mesopotamia a new people appeared. Their later representatives had Aryan names, and they worshipped the gods Indra, Varuna, Mitra, and the twin Asvins who were subsequently introduced by Aryans into India. Their state became known as Mitanni and it may be that the horse-using “Aryans” formed its military aristocracy. Whether or not the Hyksos conquest was accomplished with Aryan aid we cannot say, but it is of significance that the influence of the Aryan overlords extended as far south as Palestine. The Semites may have served them as mercenaries and afterwards formed military states and adopted Aryan methods of warfare.

It is possible that seafarers, and especially the Phœnicians, co-operated with the land forces which swept into the Delta area and plundered and destroyed. Egypt was a rich country and much booty was to be obtained in the prosperous northern towns. The earlier invaders appear to have been guilty of the grossest barbarities and to have terrorized the people with their carnival of destruction. Perhaps they were merely raiders, but they opened the

way for the hordes of Bedouins who coveted the fertile Nile valley and proceeded to take possession of it as earlier Semites had taken possession of Babylonia.

At first the Hyksos control was limited to the Delta area, but ultimately Upper Egypt was conquered and one of their kings, Apophis II, held sway even to the south of Thebes. He reigned for over thirty-three years. The seat of government was situated in the north-east of the Delta, and it may be that the Hyksos area of control extended into Palestine and even north Syria. Too little is known, however, of the Hyksos period, although it extended over two centuries, to say anything definite in this connection, but it would appear from the evidence available, that a number of Asiatic states were united as allies and that for a time the Hittites, as well as the Aryans, formed military aristocracies in different localities. The Amorites who occupied Canaan were vassals of the Hittites, and it was probably during this period that Jerusalem became a place of strategic importance. "Thy birth and thy nativity," declared Ezekiel of Jerusalem, "is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite."¹

Although the Egyptian arts and crafts were paralysed during the Hyksos period—that is, in so far as they were inspired by the old Egyptian faith—the material prosperity of Egypt did not suffer greatly. No doubt, the Nile valley became the granary of the Asiatics. Trade by sea and land routes appears to have been fostered, as relics of the Hyksos King Khian have been found as far apart as in Crete and in Baghdad.

The later Hyksos kings appear to have become almost completely Egyptianized. They identified the god Set with the Syrian Baal and attempted to impose their state theology on Thebes. For a time, too, the Theban rulers

¹ *Ezekiel*, xvi, 3.

appear to have acknowledged the suzerainty of the Hyksos, but the spirit of Egyptian nationality was never completely suppressed in Upper Egypt, and ultimately the Theban royal house became strong enough to assert its independence.

The national movement gathered strength during the XVIIth Theban Dynasty, which lasted for over half a century. Then arose the great liberator, Ahmes I, the founder of the XVIIIth Dynasty, who allied himself with the Memphites and overthrew the Hyksos power. But we know less about Ahmes than we do of his successors who engaged in the work of destroying all relics of the Hyksos Age and in building and endowing temples. His son, Amen-hotep I, reigned for a little over ten years, and appears to have been occupied mainly in reorganizing the kingdom. Campaigns against the Nubians in the south and the Libyans on the north are referred to in the records, and there would seem also to have been an invasion of Syria.

We now enter upon the brilliant Empire period of Egypt, the first part of which was covered by the XVIIIth Dynasty, which endured for over 200 years (1788-1580 B.C.). This Dynasty began and ended in periods of transition. Ahmes I, the liberator, restored to supreme political power the cult of the Theban god Amon; one of its last kings was the now famous Tutankhamon, during whose brief reign the Amon priesthood, having for a period suffered loss of political power, once again seized the reins of government. During the XVIIIth Dynasty Egypt became the strongest military power in the ancient world. It was undoubtedly, too, the richest existing country. In this connexion it is only necessary to refer to the treasure found in the tomb of Tutankhamon to emphasize how important was the part played by Egypt in the development of the arts and crafts and in the progress of civilization in the ancient world, long before Hellenic Greece had begun to be or Rome was

born. Although, for a long period, the Hyksos had dominated Egypt, its civilization was not and could not be greatly altered. It was based upon the agricultural mode of life, and depended for its very existence on the maintenance of that mode of life. The political changes which took place did not obliterate the immemorial modes of thought rooted in the immemorial agricultural mode of life in the Nile valley. Although the Hyksos may have introduced strange gods, these had to be identified, as were Baal and Set, with the existing deities of Egypt. It was inevitable that the Egyptians should achieve an intellectual conquest of their conquerors and that the later Hyksos rulers should become Egyptianized, but the destruction of Hyksos works of arts, buildings, and records has rendered impossible the study of the gradual absorption by Egypt of its conquerors. The Kassites, who had seized the throne of Babylon, were similarly Babylonized, and the civilization continued the same. A change of rulers could not change the economic conditions of either Babylonia or Egypt.

Under Hyksos sway, when Asiatic autocrats occupied the throne of the Pharaohs, Egypt experienced the discipline of adversity. The elements that had, during the Feudal and Middle Kingdom periods, made for disunion, were suppressed. When the liberation was completed and the Hyksos military aristocracy driven out of Egypt, the Pharaohs again became as great autocrats as were those of the Old Kingdom period. They had evidently learned from the Hyksos that the unity and resisting power of Egypt could not subsist without the establishment of a strong and autocratic centralized government.

The arts and crafts of Egypt were not, then, suppressed during the Hyksos period. The Egyptian alabaster vase lid bearing the name of a Hyksos king, and found by Sir Arthur Evans in Crete, and the granite lion of the same monarch

from Baghdad, as well as the fragment of a sitting colossus in granite from Bubastes in the Delta, afford proof of this. The sculptors had lost none of their skill; the habit of engraving inscriptions in hieroglyphics was continued; mummification was practised, and the beliefs associated with that practice remained unaltered. It was the Hyksos heresies that were revolting to the Egyptians, as revolting as were the heresies of Akhenaton to the cult of Amon during the latter part of the XVIIIth Dynasty. The fact that the Hyksos had shown special favour to the god Set, is believed to have emphasized the sinister character acquired by that deity, for although in the Pyramid Texts he is referred to as the slayer of Osiris, and as one who was punished and subdued, he had his beneficent aspect and, as Breasted has shown, was "King of the South on equal terms with Horus as King of the North".¹ The identification of Set with the Hyksos Baal, Sutekh, appears to have ultimately left an impress on Theban mythology. The early Seti kings of the XIXth Dynasty, however, still regarded Set in his older aspect.

The recovery of Egypt after the expulsion of the Hyksos was comparatively rapid, because its great wealth was once again at the disposal of its native rulers. Once again, too, the activities of its artistic craftsmen were directed towards the expression of native beliefs and native ideals. Amon-Ra became the symbol of a reunited Egypt, and other great gods were regarded as manifestations of him. In a hymn to the Theban overlord of the gods it is declared:

Memphis receives thee in the form of Ptah—
He who is the first-born of all gods;
He who was at the beginning.

Amenhotep I appears to have heavily endowed the Amon

¹ *Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, p. 40.

cult at Thebes, and he began the erection at Karnak of those magnificent buildings which were added to by his successors. Thothmes I, who succeeded him, waged war in Nubia and Syria, and boasted that his dominions extended as far as "the circuit of the sun". He recorded that he had subdued the rebels in the Delta area and suppressed lawlessness in Egypt. One of his notable acts, the motive for which is uncertain, was to nominate as his successor his daughter Hatshepsut, during whose reign there were obscure political movements. Her precise relations with Thothmes II and Thothmes III are not very clear. Apparently she concerned herself greatly with religious matters, as her most interesting recorded achievement was the sending of a fleet to Punt to obtain myrrh, frankincense, ivory, gold, and other articles of religious value, as well as apes, monkeys, &c.

About a century had elapsed from the time of the expulsion of the Hyksos when Thothmes III, the "Napoleon of Egypt", found it necessary to invade Syria in force and deal with his rivals, who were again seriously threatening Egyptian supremacy. His "boundary" had been violated by invaders whom he found concentrated in force at Megiddo, an important strategic point on the Ridge of Carmel. He proved himself a daring general and won a brilliant victory, capturing rich booty. A rapid "sweeping movement" northward towards Lebanon completed his success, and he was then in a position to dictate terms of peace. Palestine, from Lebanon southward, was included in the Empire of Egypt; the Asiatic powers were terrorized, and even Assyria sent to Thothmes gifts which were regarded in Thebes as tribute. Other campaigns were conducted, and ultimately Kadesh on the Orontes (the modern Tell-Nebi-Mindoh) was captured. Carchemish was also reduced, and the Mitanni war lords, as well as the Hittites and Babylonians, then sent gifts to the conqueror. Phœnicia was compelled to acknow-



1035

A PLATOON OF EGYPTIAN SPEARMEN

From the bas-relief in the Temple at Der-el-Bahari.

Photo. Sebah



ledge the overlordship of Thothmes, who was strong at sea as well as on land, while " the isles in the midst of the sea " were forced to recognize his supremacy, and their rulers offered gifts as peace offerings. The transports of Thothmes carried his troops to Syrian harbours, and these veterans might at any time be led against an island power which attempted to thwart the great Pharaoh in his designs.

In all, Thothmes III appears to have conducted seventeen successful campaigns, the last being directed against Kadesh, which again gave trouble. Nubia was reduced to subjection, as was Syria, and the Egyptian Empire extended from the borders of Asia Minor to the Somali coast, while the Eastern Mediterranean was dominated by the Egyptian fleet.

The son, grandson, and great-grandson of the Conqueror, Amenhotep II, Thothmes IV, and Amenhotep III, maintained the prestige of Egypt, and the great empire was a reality for about seventy years. Then the famous " heretic king ", Amenhotep IV (Akhenaton), came to the throne. During his reign the Empire in Syria went to pieces. He was succeeded in turn by Sakere, Tutankhamon, and Eye, all of whom had brief reigns.

The great treasure found in the tomb of Tutankhamon emphasizes the brilliance of the civilization of the XVIIIth Dynasty, and also its essentially Egyptian character, while it is eloquent of the wealth and skill at the disposal of the Pharaohs.

More light, however, is thrown on the history of the period by the cuneiform tablets found at Tell-el-Amarna in 1887 and by others since brought to light, for these contain letters that passed between the Court of Akhenaton and the representatives and allies of the Pharaoh in Western Asia. The chief kingdoms of the time, in addition to Egypt, were those of the Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Hittites, the Mitannians, and the Minoan-Mycenæans of the Greek

mainland. Babylonia was dominated by the Kassites, who, like the aristocrats of Mitanni in Upper Mesopotamia, spoke an Aryan language, or, at any rate, retained their Aryan names. It may be, as has been suggested, that there was an Aryan element in the Hittite confederacy. Chieftains with Aryan names were, as indicated, in power even in Palestine.

Egypt, which had been made so strong by Thothmes III, remained supreme as a world-power until the close of the reign of Amenhotep III, the father of Akhenaton. But an ambitious "Kaiser" was beginning to make his presence felt in Asia Minor even before Amenhotep III had passed away. This was Shubbiluliuma, whose capital was situated in the Anatolian province of Cappadocia and probably at modern Boghaz-Keui ("the village in the pass"). He appears to have allied himself with all or most of the various states between Eastern Cappadocia and the Ægean Sea. This "Kaiser" had visions of conquest in Syria, but his intended southern extension was blocked by Mitanni, which had long been an ally of Egypt's. Marriages had taken place between the royal families of Mitanni and Egypt and also between the aristocrats of both countries. Amenhotep III is believed to have been the son of a Mitanni princess.

The Hittite king waged war against Mitanni, but was defeated by its King Tushratta. He appears, however, to have won to his side a political party in the buffer state, for he supported the succession to the throne of Mattiuaza, son of Tushratta. This "Kaiser" afterwards arranged treaties of alliance in Syria, where the Amorites acknowledged him as their overlord. But while he was doing his utmost to extend his sway over the Egyptian "sphere of influence" in Syria, he wrote friendly letters to Akhenaton. The wily intriguer had evidently taken the measure of the dreamer who sat upon the Egyptian throne.

Ultimately Mitanni was conquered and Shubbiluliuma took possession of Carchemish. At any rate the ruler of that city had a Hittite name, and he appears to have recognized Shubbiluliuma as the emperor.

During the reign of Pharaoh Akhenaton the Egyptian Empire in Western Asia was gradually broken up, and when Tutankhamon came to the throne the Hittites and Amorites had established their power in Syria, while Palestine was being invaded by the Sutu (Bedouins) and the Khabiri (Hebrews).

Akhenaton had devoted his life to establishing a new religious cult in Egypt and its dependencies. He worshipped Aton, the god of the "sun disc", and officially suppressed the worship of Amon. Influential Amonists fled from Egypt and some of them took refuge in Phœnicia. It may be that these and other "rebels" became the tools of Egypt's enemies. Thebes was deserted by the court, a new capital was established at Tell-el-Amarna, and for about a quarter of a century Egypt was dominated by the Aton cult.

The restoration of the Amon cult appears to have taken place during the brief reign of Tutankhamon. A weak priest-king succeeded him. Then the throne was seized by Horemheb, who had been military commander in the north during Akhenaton's reign. He appears to have waged war in Southern Palestine, but his chief concern was to reorganize Egypt and to re-establish Amon worship. Law and order had to be restored before Egypt could attempt to recover its lost empire in Western Asia. Horemheb recorded in his inscriptions that he legislated for Egypt so as to make its people prosper. He extended the Amon temple at Karnak, and sent an expedition to Punt to obtain the incense, gold, &c., required for religious purposes. After reigning for over thirty years, he was succeeded by Rameses I, the representative of a Delta family and already an elderly man.

We have now entered on the XIXth Dynasty, the second phase of the Empire period of Egypt, which endured for over a hundred and forty years. Seti I, son of Rameses I, was a fighting Pharaoh, and he set himself the task of reconquering the lost empire of Thothmes III in Western Asia. He invaded Palestine, which was at the time greatly disturbed, and pressed northward with success. Megiddo fell to his attack, and he followed his success to the slopes of Lebanon. A notable achievement in the eyes of the Thebans was the capture of Yenoam, which, a century and a half earlier, had been taken by Thothmes III and presented to the god Amon. Once again the power of Egypt was established in an area which had not seen an Egyptian army for fifty years—not since Amenhotep III, the father of Akhenaton, had been at Sidon. The kings and merchant princes of Phœnicia accepted the inevitable, and made offers of allegiance. No doubt they recognized that they were more likely to prosper as the friends and allies of the Egyptians than as the vassals of the Hittites. Egypt was a wealthy country, and its markets lay open to them. Besides, Egyptian sea-power had been revived. Seti I was strong enough at sea to have large consignments of cedar logs transported safely to the mouth of the Nile. Cyprus, recognizing that Egypt once again “ruled the waves”, sent gifts to Pharaoh Seti.

Egypt, then, was again prosperous, and the art relics of the period testify to the fact that wealth, which ensures leisure, had been accumulated, and that the Amon priesthood were consequently enabled to train and employ sculptors, artists, and skilled artisans in large numbers. Temple building was actively engaged in; peace prevailed in the Nile valley; agriculture was promoted, and the cities were hives of industry and commerce. Gold was brought from Nubia to endow the temples.

The next Pharaoh was the famous Rameses II, an ambitious, egotistical, and powerful monarch who reigned for sixty-seven years (1292-1225 B.C.). He appears to have thrust aside an elder brother when he came to the throne. Four years later he found himself involved in a great war. The Hittites had been forced by Seti I to relinquish their hold on South Syria and apparently to arrange a treaty of peace, but under a new king, named Mutallu, and with the help of allies, they endeavoured to reconquer the lost territory.

Rameses raised a great army of about 20,000 men, half of which was chariotry. There were four divisions. It is estimated that the entire army required ten miles of road space when all the divisions were closed up.¹ The Hittite army was in position at Kadesh on the Orontes, and appears to have been as large as that of Egypt.

Rameses seems to have been deceived by spies, for he pushed forward towards Kadesh with a single division—that of Amon, consisting of about 5000 men—never dreaming that the wily Hittite general had laid a trap for him. He took up position in front of Kadesh, while the invisible Hittites were marshalled in strength behind the city and on the other side of the Orontes. Suddenly the Pharaoh was attacked on his right flank by Hittite chariotry which had crossed a ford, the intention of the Hittite general being to come between the Amon division led by Rameses and the rest of the Egyptian army. The Hittites were at first successful. They attacked the second division, that of Ra, while it was on the march, and scattered it. One portion of this division fled northward towards Rameses, and another fled southward towards the two rear divisions which were coming up. It seemed as if the Egyptians would be disastrously defeated. They should have been, but the Hittite

¹ Major A. H. Burne in *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, Vol. VII, pp. 191 *et seq.*
(D 635)

general hesitated to follow up his success in force. He seems to have been stunned by the fury of the counter-attack delivered by Rameses, while the Hittite troops which overran the Pharaoh's camp engaged themselves greedily in gathering rich spoils. Egyptian reinforcements were allowed to come up and hold the enemy at bay until the rear divisions were hurried forward to fill up the gap and deliver a great and final counter-attack in force. A disaster was then turned into what Rameses boasted was a victory. But Kadesh was not captured; it was defended by a strong force of infantry which, had it been rushed into the fray when the Ra division was scattered, would have ensured a complete Hittite victory.

Rameses returned to Egypt and celebrated his success, but his failure to capture Kadesh had the inevitable result. Southern Syria revolted, and gradually the Pharaoh's enemies overran Palestine and began to threaten the north-east Delta frontier. Had Rameses not extricated himself at the battle of Kadesh and saved his army from destruction, Egypt itself would have been conquered.

Little is known of the subsequent campaigns conducted by Rameses to recover his lost empire. That they were arduous is certain, for he took three years to establish his power in Palestine. Then he pushed northward, and he appears to have occupied Kadesh. Further successes were subsequently achieved in the Mitanni area, but Rameses never recovered the North Syrian part of the empire of Thothmes III. In 1272 B.C., the twenty-first year of his reign, he arranged a treaty of peace with the Hittites—"a good treaty of peace and of brotherhood", as it was officially described, "ensuring peace for ever".

By this time a change had come over the ancient world which made such a treaty necessary. Assyria, the great and terrible predatory state of the future, was beginning

to become powerful and to threaten the security of the empires of both the Hittites and the Egyptians, while in Asia Minor the Hittite confederacy was being sapped by fighting states bent on conquest and in quest of territory for their surplus populations.

CHAPTER VI

The Passing of the Pharaohs

Greek and Anatolian "Vikings"—First Sea Raid on Egypt—Israel in Palestine—Second Sea Raid—Coming of Philistines—Trojan War—Late Priest Kings of Egypt—Rise of the Libyans—The Age of Solomon—Ethiopian Pharaohs—The "Broken Reed"—Assyrian Invasion of Egypt—Sack of Thebes—Restoration Age—Circumnavigation of Africa—Babylonian Allies, the Scythians and Medes—Fall of Nineveh—Egypt as Ally of Assyria—New Babylonian Empire—Pharaoh Amasis—The Persian Conquest—Egypt under Greeks and Romans.

The siege of Troy, celebrated by Homer, is but the echo of the clash of new nations with the old, which first began to be heard when the Egyptians and the Hittites arranged their treaty of peace. Egypt virtually abandoned her idea of an empire in Western Asia. Some of the Pharaohs who flourished after Rameses II might raid Syria, but they could not maintain for long their hold upon territory there, and had to be content instead with treaties and with the fickle allegiance of vassals who favoured the "highest bidder".

Early in the thirteenth century B.C. the Mitanni state was overwhelmed by the Assyrians. The Hittites took their share of the territory and kept their hold on North Syria, but the time was coming when the Hittites were to vanish as leaders of the Anatolian confederacy and to be replaced by the Mushki, who were apparently conquerors from the west.

Merne-ptah, the successor of Rameses II, had to resist a new enemy. Hordes of Greek and Anatolian "vikings"

from across the Mediterranean had begun to overwhelm the Delta coasts, and, apparently in alliance with the Libyans, to penetrate far inland. The Western Delta was for a period in possession of the Libyans, and Libyan mercenaries were employed by Seti I and Rameses II, while the latter had enlisted also Shardana and Danuana mercenaries from Asia Minor and Europe. The vikings included the Shardana, the Danuana, the Akhaivasha, the Shakalsha, and the Tursha. It has been suggested that the Akhaivasha were Achæans and the Danuana the Danoi of Homer, and that the raids had a connection with the race movements and conquests which culminated in the fall of the Minoan regime in Crete. Merneptah resisted successfully the attacks of the Libyans and the maritime peoples who, he recorded scornfully, came to Egypt "to seek the necessities of their mouths". He also recorded military successes in Palestine, and it is of special interest to note that he referred to Israel—"Israel is desolated: her seed is not"—as a people already inhabiting the "Land of Promise".

About thirty years later (1200 B.C.) Rameses III of the XXth Dynasty, the last strong military Pharaoh of Egypt, had to deal with another and greater "sea raid". In addition to the peoples already mentioned, the raiders included the Tikkarai. These appear to have been identical with the people who gave their name to Zakro in Crete. Supporting the sea-raiders were land-raiders from Asia Minor who were known as the Pulishta (Pulesti), and were apparently the Philistines. Rameses III won a victory in the first naval battle of which an adequate record survives. He had the event illustrated as well as recorded in his temple at Medinet Habu on the western plain of Thebes. Rameses also invaded Palestine and checked the advance of the land-raiders. The Trojan War, celebrated by Homer, appears to have broken out a few years after this sea raid on Egypt, and it may

be, as has been suggested, that the peoples who were driven from the Delta coast afterwards turned their attention to Asia Minor.¹

Egypt remained on the defensive. It ceased to be the great military nation of the ancient world, and its Pharaohs were no longer conquerors. The XXth Dynasty, which lasted a little over a century, had, in all, twelve kings who were named Rameses, some of whom had brief reigns. In the XXIst Dynasty the high priest of Amon seized the crown by right of his wife, a royal princess. For nearly a century and a half Egypt remained under the sway of the priest-kings, and the army was composed mainly of Libyan and other mercenaries.

The XXIInd Dynasty marks the rise of the Libyans to power. Sheshonk I, the Shishak of the Bible, the next founder of a new Dynasty, revived for a period the Egyptian Empire in Western Asia, subduing Palestine as far north as an area referred to as the "Field of Abram". Solomon had married his daughter, and after Solomon's death the Pharaoh established his overlordship and enriched himself with spoils and annual tribute. Thebes was then the great and prosperous city of which Homer sang:

. . . Thebes
With mighty stores of wealth, a hundred gates
Each pouring forth two hundred men with cars
And horses.

Like the later Hyksos kings, the Libyan Pharaohs of Egypt were Egyptianized; they worshipped the gods of Egypt, and when they died they were mummified like the native Pharaohs of old. Shortly after 800 B.C. the Ethiopians began to assert their power in the south, and half a century later Piankhy became the strongest ruler in Egypt. The north

¹ See also Chapter X.

revolted, however, and Tefnekt, a prince of Sais and Memphis, overran the Delta region and Middle Egypt. He even succeeded in penetrating as far south as Thebes, but the Ethiopian Pharaoh drove him back and ultimately achieved complete victory. Piankhy afterwards permitted the local princes, who recognized his suzerainty, to govern in the north. His grandson Shabaka, however, displayed great activity as Pharaoh of all Egypt. He became the ally of King Hosea of Israel, and seemed to have dreams of restoring the overlordship of Egypt in Syria, but Sargon, King of Assyria, made that impossible. Taharka, the third and last Ethiopian Pharaoh, also took an active part in Asian politics, and became the ally of Hezekiah, King of Judah, and of Luli, King of Sidon. Isaiah warned his countrymen against the alliance in the memorable words: "Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce it".

Egypt had, indeed, become a broken reed, and ultimately it was invaded (in 674 B.C.) by the Assyrian Emperor Esarhaddon. Among the Delta princes who rose into power under the suzerainty of Assyria was Necho of Sais. He was slain at Memphis in a battle against Tanut-amon, the Ethiopian ruler of Upper Egypt. Once again, the Assyrians invaded Egypt in force. This was during the reign of their last great emperor, Ashur-banipal. Thebes was taken and sacked, and an echo of its overwhelming disaster vibrates in the words of the Hebrew prophet Nahum,¹ who refers to it as "populous No" and says: "Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, and it was infinite . . . yet was she carried away, she went into captivity: her young children also were dashed in pieces at the top of all the streets; and they cast lots for her honourable men, and all her great men were bound in chains".

According to Herodotus, Psamtek, son of Necho, who had taken refuge in Syria, then became the Assyrian governor of Egypt. Soon afterwards he seized the throne, having married a daughter of Taharka, the Ethiopian, and expelled the Assyrian soldiers and officials. Assyria itself was doomed to go to pieces.

Psamtek, who established his power at Sais, was the first king of the XXVIth Dynasty, which endured for 138 years (663-525 B.C.). This is the period usually referred to as the "Restoration". Egypt, with its thirty centuries of traditions and records, was stirred to the depths by a great national revival. Men looked backward rather than forward; they drew inspiration from the past, and set themselves to restore the Egypt of the Old Kingdom so that life assumed an archaic aspect. The love of the antique became not only a fashion but a passion. Artists, sculptors, theologians, artisans, courtiers, and Pharaohs combined in the endeavour to restore what had been, to revive modes of life and modes of thought, just as they revived archaic titles and ceremonies, so as to emphasize their patriotism and sense of nationality. Thebes ceased to be the centre of culture and administration. Amon's supremacy had passed for ever, and Osiris was restored to his ancient supremacy among the gods; the ancient religion of the masses of the people thus triumphed over the state religion and supplanted it. Osiris as Osiris-Apis (Serapis) gradually became the chief god of Egypt. His cult was ultimately established even in Rome. The ancient underground Osirian Paradise, which supplanted the Celestial Paradise of the sun-god, was once again regarded as the "land of bliss" to which the faithful hoped to pass after death.

It was during this period that the influence of Egypt issued forth in new volume, to leave its impress on the cultures of many peoples far and near. Trade was revived

by land and sea. Colonies of Greek and Phœnician merchants who settled in Egypt were caught in the spell of the Egyptian mysteries and the glamour of antiquity which pulsated in them; foreign artisans became the pupils of Egypt; the mariners who carried the goods of Egypt to other lands and searched for the things for which there existed a demand in the Egyptian markets, became the missionaries of Egyptian culture over ever-widening areas.

It was during the Restoration period that the Phœnician sailors employed by Pharaoh Necho circumnavigated Africa, sailing southward from the Red Sea and returning through the Strait of Gibraltar. The forgotten Columbuses and Da Gamas of the time opened the sea-ways along which the "complexes" of ancient Egypt were carried to distant lands and from these, by the descendants of colonists, to lands more distant still.

In Western Asia political changes of far-reaching character were taking place. The coming of Persia as a World-Power was heralded by the plundering raids of the Scythians and Medes. Psamtek, who had shaken off the yoke of Assyria and had become the founder of Egypt's XXVIth Dynasty (663-525 B.C.), found it necessary to ally himself with Assyria towards the latter part of his long reign of fifty-four years. The Empire of Assyria was crumbling, but Egypt recognized that if it was completely broken up, the Scythians would overrun Syria and Palestine, and descend on its own Delta frontier. Babylonia threw off the yoke of Assyria and became the ally of the Scythians and Medes.

A flood of light has been thrown on this period by the discovery, by Mr. C. J. Gadd of the British Museum, of a Neo-Babylonian Chronicle.¹ Psamtek invaded Palestine and came into conflict with Scythians there, and, according to Herodotus, saved Egypt by bribing them with liberal gifts.

¹ *The Fall of Nineveh*, London, 1923.

Nineveh fell in 612 B.C. Three years later Psamtek's son, Necho II, became the Pharaoh. He invaded Palestine and defeated Josiah, the ally of Babylonia, and when Josiah died, he deposed his successor Jehoahaz and placed that prince's brother Eliakim on the throne of Judah. Then he pressed northward to the aid of his Assyrian ally.

After Nineveh fell, Ashur-uballit, the last Assyrian king, established his court at Harran. There for a few years he kept up the struggle against his enemies. From 609 till 605 B.C., Pharaoh Necho did his utmost to prevent the disruption of the shrunken Empire of Assyria. In 610 B.C., Ashur-uballit had been forced to evacuate Harran before the combined forces of the Babylonians and Scythians. The Egyptians and Assyrians endeavoured to recapture the city in 609 B.C. A siege of two months proved, however, to be unsuccessful, and in the end the allies had to retreat before a Babylonian army which came north to the relief of the Scythian defenders of Harran. The last blow was struck in 605 B.C. when Pharaoh Necho and his Assyrian allies were heavily defeated at Carchemish by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Assyria ceased to exist after that. Necho's army retreated southward through Palestine. "And the King of Egypt", according to the biblical narrative, "came not again any more out of his land; for the King of Babylon had taken from the brook of Egypt unto the river Euphrates, all that pertained to the King of Egypt."¹ Had Necho been successful, he would have re-established in Western Asia the Egyptian Empire which Thothmes III had won by conquest 900 years before his day, and the new Assyria would have, like old Mitanni, formed a "buffer state" against the inroads of the warriors of Anatolia and Mesopotamia.

Pharaoh Apries (the Biblical Hophra) sent a naval force against Phœnicia and appears to have obtained control for a

¹ 2 Kings, xxiv, 7.

time over the Lebanon area, but he could not prevail against the Babylonians on land. He had been unable to save Jerusalem, and he was expelled from Lebanon. Apries, however, developed Egypt's sea power. He conquered Cyprus and had intimate relations with the Greeks. His successor Amasis (Ahmes), who reigned for forty-four years, had won popularity in Egypt by opposing Greek influence there, and he founded the city of Naucratis as a Greek market town on the Canopic mouth of the Nile; he was the friend of Polycrates of Samos. The revised Egyptian legal code of Amasis was adopted in Athens.

After the death of Nebuchadnezzar of Babylonia (562 B.C.) the rising World-Power was Persia. In 539 B.C., fourteen years before Pharaoh Amasis of Egypt had died, Babylon was captured by Cyrus. Amasis had previously become the ally of the King of Babylonia as well as of Cræsus of Lydia, and of the Spartans. But the League was not powerful enough to resist Persian aggression. The closing years of Amasis were overshadowed by the threats of the new World-Power. His son, Psamtek III, succeeded him in 525 B.C., and had reigned but a few months when Cambysses, son of Cyrus, conquered the ancient land of the Pharaohs. "There shall be no more a prince out of the land of Egypt", Ezekiel declared.¹ The days of the native Pharaohs came to an end with the Persian conquest.

There were, however, numerous revolts in Egypt during the period of Persian ascendancy, and these appear to have been supported by the Greeks. Time and again Egypt sent supplies to the states which attempted to shake off the Persian yoke.

In 334 B.C. Alexander the Great, having obtained a secure footing in Asia Minor, occupied Syria, and pressed on to Egypt, which fell like ripe fruit into his hands. Then

¹ Ezekiel, xxx, 13.

he struck at the heart of the Persian power and overthrew the last Darius. Egypt passed afterwards to the Greek Ptolemies, and the Greek overlords were succeeded in turn by the Roman, but in face of every political upheaval and of war's utmost ravages, the immemorial culture of Egypt remained unexterminated. Its influence continued as before to permeate the new world. Both Greece and Rome were deeply stirred by fresh infusions of the Egyptian spirit, and Greek art was strongly influenced by the Egyptian art of the Restoration period.

Even after Christianity had been introduced into Egypt, the native converts perpetuated the ancient customs and beliefs of their ancestors. "Gnosticism," says Naville, "which plays so great a part in Christian Egypt, is certainly a product of the old religious conceptions."

In our own day, when Egypt has once again become an independent nation, the spell of its ancient civilization has been revived and is being intensified by remarkable discoveries of relics of past ages. We are beginning to realize what the world owes to that wonderful land in which civilization was fostered in the dim and remote past—that land in which "the little leaven" which was to "leaven the whole lump" of the ancient world began to operate after the agricultural mode of life came into existence.

Ancient Cretan Chronology

ANCIENT CRETAN CHRONOLOGY

(Dating according to Sir Arthur Evans, who adopts Meyer's system for Egypt)

Neolithic period ended, 3400 B.C.

Early Minoan I (before Egyptian Dynasty IV), 3400-2800 B.C.

Early Minoan II (Egyptian Dynasties IV-VI: Second city of Troy),
2800-2400 B.C.

Early Minoan III (Egyptian Dynasties VI-IX), 2400-2100 B.C.

Middle Minoan I (Egyptian Dynasties X-XII), 2100-1900 B.C.

Middle Minoan II (Egyptian Dynasties XII-XIII), 1900-1700 B.C.

Middle Minoan III (Egyptian Dynasties XIV-XVII), 1700-1580 B.C.

Late Minoan I (Egyptian Dynasty XVIII), 1580-1450 B.C.

Late Minoan II (Thothmes III of Egypt died 1447 B.C.), 1450-1400 B.C.

Late Minoan III (Akhenaton and Tutankhamon), 1400-1200 B.C.

Supremacy transferred to Greek mainland, *c.* 1200 B.C.

Trojan War (Greek dating), 1194-1184 B.C.

ANCIENT BRITISH DATES

Egyptian blue beads found in South-western England (Stonehenge, &c.),
c. 1300 B.C. (Sayce); *c.* 1400 B.C. (Hall).

Picts in Orkney and Northern Scotland, before 322 B.C.

[The Pictish organization was dual, one section being the "Orc" ("Boar") clan and the other the "Cat" clan. Diodorus Siculus, apparently quoting Timæus, a contemporary of Pytheas, refers to Cape Orcas on the extreme north of Britain, i.e. on the Pentland Firth. Orcades, the plural of Orcas, and modern Orkney, retain the "Orc" ("Boar") clan name of the Picts or Pects, whose "brochs" so closely resemble the "nuraghi" of Sardinia which have links with the Ægean]

CHAPTER VII

Cretan Civilization

Homer's "Fair and rich Land"—Egyptian Colonies—Long Connection with Egypt—Early Seafarers—Minoans like Polynesians—Development of Navigation—Migrating Birds guided Navigators—Neolithic Cultures in Crete—Population Problem—Beginning of Agricultural Mode of Life—Egyptian Barley Seeds imported.

The "cradle" of civilization in south-eastern Europe was the Island of Crete—that "fair and rich land", as Homer so finely says, "in the midst of the wine-dark sea". At an early period in its history it received colonists from Egypt, and its connection with the land of the Pharaohs was maintained during the twenty centuries of its existence as a centre of virile culture. "Its enterprising inhabitants," writes Sir Arthur Evans,¹ "continually absorbed and assimilated Egyptian forms and ideas, developing them on independent lines. They took what they wanted, nothing more, and were neither artistically nor politically enslaved."

Being an island, Crete could not have been reached by Egyptian prospectors prior to the invention of boats. As its earliest settlers practised the Neolithic industry, it is evident, therefore, that the craft of boat-building and the science of navigation had been well advanced long before the discovery of how to work metals was made. The earliest boats, as has been shown, were constructed with reeds which were bound together and rendered watertight with pitch. These

¹ *The Palace of Minos*, Vol. I, p. 19.

were the models of the later skin boats similar to the vessels referred to in the Latin version of the lost work of Himilco, the Carthaginian explorer:

“These people (the inhabitants of the *Æstrymnides*) do not build their keels of pine, nor do they know how to fashion them, neither do they round their barks from fir . . . but with wondrous skill they make each skiff with skins bound together, and often in their hide-bound crafts skim over the mighty deep.”

That long voyages could be safely and skilfully accomplished in vessels constructed without the aid of metals is emphasized by the evidence afforded by the Polynesian migrations. The Pacific vikings when visited by the early missionaries set out in their “large and built-up and sewn canoes” to visit islands from 400 to 700 miles across the ocean. In earlier times they went much longer distances. The late Mr. S. Percy Smith refers to a Polynesian canoe voyage of 2500 miles from Tahiti to New Zealand, which occupied 20 days. Allowing for temporary waits at islands on the route, the average distance covered each day was about 145 miles. The same writer reminds us that the distance from Borneo to the Hawaiian group of islands is between 6000 and 7000 miles, and that it was navigated by the ancient Polynesian mariners.¹

It must be recognized, as has been pointed out, that the sea was less a “barrier” to ancient migrating peoples than used to be thought by archæologists. Man had not to wait until he had invented the copper saw before he could venture on the Mediterranean or the Indian Ocean. He became an accomplished boat-builder while still using Neolithic implements. But before he could cross the sea, or follow the coast-line to explore unknown lands, he had to study the science of navigation. It is one thing to build a boat and

¹ *Hawaiki* (4th edition), pp. 125 *et seq.*

another thing to navigate it. The early boatmen, as has been indicated, must have been long accustomed to river navigation before they dared to make even short voyages on the Mediterranean.

It would appear that the history of early civilization in Crete is closely associated with the history of the science of navigation. Apparently the earliest inhabitants of the island were mainly of Mediterranean racial stock. As much is suggested by the crania of post-Neolithic times. A minority of Anatolian broad-heads are represented. Perhaps the earliest Cretans were pioneers from Egyptian colonies in North Syria or Asia Minor. On the other hand, they may have reached Crete direct from the North African coast. The seafaring prospectors may not have explored the Syrian coast alone; no doubt they also ventured westward along the North African seaboard. It is possible that they took note of the routes followed by migrating birds. As much is suggested by the story of Uenuamon, the Egyptian emissary who was forced to remain a time in Cyprus where, gazing across the sea, he lamented: "Seest thou not the birds which fly, which fly back unto Egypt? Look at them; they go unto the cool canal. And how long do I remain abandoned here?"¹ This story may be somewhat late, but the reference to the birds suggests a very ancient habit of seafarers. Some forgotten Egyptian Columbus may have at an early period dared to follow the "bird path" across the Mediterranean and discovered the island of Crete and the Cyclades. He would have caught sight of the bald crest of Mount Ida, which rises to a height of 7670 feet, when yet a considerable distance from the future home of Minoan civilization. The nearest point to Crete on the North African coast is about 180 miles; from Alexandria the distance to Zakro is 320 miles, from Cyprus 340 miles, and from Lycia,

¹ King and Hall's *Egypt and Western Asia in the Light of Recent Discoveries*, p. 430.
(D 635)

by way of Rhodes and Karpathos, 190 miles. The chain of islands formed by the Cyclades may have enticed the early navigators towards Crete from the Anatolian or Greek mainland, but the Neolithic deposits at Crete have been found to be older than any permanent settlement in the Cyclades. Indeed no trace of Cycladic Neolithic industry has been brought to light. On the Greek mainland Neolithic remains are scanty and scattered. Cyprus has yielded scarcely any Neolithic relics. In Crete, however, there was a long period of Neolithic culture which, Sir Arthur Evans considers, cannot represent fewer than 4500 years. This calculation allows a metre for about a thousand years. The various deposits have been classified under the three main divisions—Lower, Middle, and Upper Neolithic. In Lower Neolithic, which is regarded as being too advanced to indicate the beginnings of an independent culture, have been found fragments of a crude hand-made brown pottery and stumpy polished stone implements. Middle Neolithic has yielded a darker and better pottery, with incised and punctuated decoration; clay spindle whorls and spools, which indicate that flax or wool was spun; clay bird and animal figures which may have had a religious significance; and rectangular images of fat females which are regarded as representations of the mother goddess, who, as was believed, gave origin to and sustained all life. Upper Neolithic, which is considered to have been of short duration, is referred to by Sir Arthur Evans as “a period of decadence”. It merges into his “sub-Neolithic” which immediately underlies Early Minoan.

During the Neolithic stage of culture the agricultural mode of life was introduced, but it is uncertain whether the seeds of barley were carried to Crete direct from Egypt, or from the Syrian or Anatolian coasts. The fat “goddess figures” have been found throughout the Ægean area, in Anatolia, as far east as the Caspian, and in Egyptian pre-

Dynastic graves. Professor Elliot Smith holds the view that one of the types of these stout female figurines was developed from the cowry shell amulet. The stone maces of the Late Neolithic stratum came, Sir Arthur Evans considers, from Western Asia. Of special interest are the finds of obsidian flakes. A pale grey obsidian, as has been indicated, is represented both at Phæstos and Knossos. It came either from Africa or Anatolia. Black Melian obsidian has also been found at different sites. Apparently the Cretan seafarers visited the island of Melos, where, however, no trace of the Neolithic industry has been found. Naxos was also apparently visited at the earliest Knossian period to obtain the emery with which the stone implements were polished.

A difficult problem is presented by the Neolithic stratum below the west court of the Palace of Knossos. If we are to accept 4500 years as the period covered by it, we must thrust back the invention of boats and the beginnings of the science of navigation to 8000-10,000 B.C., or assume that Crete was still connected with Anatolia by a land bridge when it received its earliest settlers. There is no trace of any of the Palæolithic industries, or of the Azilian-Tardenoisian (Transition period) industry, although "Azilian" harpoons have been found in Egypt and Tardenoisian microliths in North Africa, in Western Europe, and the British Isles, and as far east as India.

If a Neolithic people lived at Knossos in comparative security for 4500 years, and were reinforced by intruders when agriculture was introduced, they must surely have increased in numbers. But here we are met with a difficult aspect of the problem. Assuming that Lower Neolithic represents a community of 100 persons, and that the population doubled itself every 500 years—the Chinese of the historic period have doubled their population every 250

years—the population of Crete at the dawn of the Minoan Age should have been over 50,000, seeing that no migrations to the Cyclades, or to the Greek mainland, took place. It is pretty certain, however, that the Island of Minos did not have anything like that population when metal implements were first introduced. The Neolithic sites which have been located were incapable of sustaining large populations. Fishers and hunters could not have formed dense communities. No Neolithic graves have been found to throw light on this aspect of the problem, or to check the Knossian pottery sequence. If the Neolithic population was large the graves should surely have been numerous. It may be that the thickness of the Neolithic stratum at Knossos was mainly due to the insanitary habits of the people. No doubt the death-rate was a heavy one in every generation.

The introduction of the agricultural mode of life cannot be thrust back beyond about 4000 B.C., and it has yet to be established at what period in the Cretan Neolithic Age Egyptian barley seeds were first imported.

CHAPTER VIII

Early Minoan Culture

Minoan Ages—Settlements in Crete of Egyptian Refugees—An imported Industry—The “ Middleman ” Problem—Discovery of Copper—Early Sea Trade—Phæstos more important than Knossos—Mediterranean Voyages—Trojan and Syrian Trade—Mochlos Jewellery—Vasiliki Pottery—Links with Egypt—Cretan Hypogæa, Sardinian Nuraghi, and Scottish Brochs—Under ground Storehouses of Syria, Germany, and Britain—Cretan Burial Customs.

The term Minoan, which Sir Arthur Evans has applied to the civilization of Crete from the close of its “ Neolithic Age ” till the dawn of its “ Iron Age ”, has been generally adopted. “ By the Greeks themselves,” Sir Arthur reminds us, “ the memory of the great Age which preceded their own diffusion throughout the Ægean lands was summed up in the name of Minos,” and he suggests that “ Minos ” may have been a divine title borne by several priest-kings.

Three main phases of Minoan civilization have been detected, and these have been classified as Early Minoan, Middle Minoan, and Late Minoan, while each has been subdivided into three parts which are numbered.

Early Minoan I is the archæological “ chalcolithic ” period during which stone implements continued in use and copper was being introduced. A “ quickening influence ” had entered the island and was gradually transforming its culture. “ That the main impulse came from the Egyptian side,” writes Sir Arthur Evans, “ can no longer now be doubted.”

It began to operate before the "Two Lands" of Egypt were united under the Ist Dynasty, and was so powerful that it could not have been due merely to commercial relations between the Cretans and the land of their ancestors. "The proto-Egyptian element in Early Minoan Crete," Sir Arthur considers, "is, in fact, so clearly defined and is so intensive in its nature as almost to suggest something more than such a connection as might have been brought about by primitive commerce. It may well, indeed, be asked whether, in the time of stress and change that marked the triumph of the Dynastic element in the Nile valley, some part of the older population thus driven out may not have made an actual settlement on the soil of Crete."¹

Others have suggested that copper and the stone jars of Egyptian type found in Crete were carried thither by proto-Phœnician sea-traders. But there is no direct proof of the existence of seafaring middlemen at that remote period. It has been proved, indeed, that the stone jars found in Crete were not all imported. One from Elunda in Eastern Crete, for instance, is of local material—a brown serpentine. The pre-Dynastic Egyptian technique had been adopted by the local craftsmen, and it is unlikely that alien "middlemen" would have injured their own trade by instructing their Cretan customers, if they were really able to do so, how to manufacture such vessels. Seeing that the stone was polished by the proto-Egyptian craftsmen with the aid of emery imported from Naxos, it is more probable that, as Sir Arthur Evans holds, the new industry was established in Crete by settlers from Egypt. This view is strengthened by the fact that the stone bowls had a religious significance. Their manufacture demanded a considerable degree of skilled labour, and they must therefore have been too costly for everyday use among a people who had little

¹ *The Palace of Minos.*

of value to offer in exchange for them. The close links between Egyptian and Minoan religion, and especially between the Delta cults and those of Crete, afford further evidence in support of the view that the "quickenning influence" of Early Minoan times was due to an intrusion from Lower Egypt.

The knowledge of how to work copper spread so rapidly and the search for it became so widespread, that some have favoured Cyprus and others Anatolia as the areas in which the invention of copper implements was accomplished. The chronological priority of Egypt cannot, however, be overlooked in this connection. It was, withal, the country in which, as has been shown, the agricultural mode of life had origin and boats were invented. The Egyptians were undoubtedly the earliest navigators in the Eastern Mediterranean area. We know of no seafaring people whose boats and ships were not imitated from early Egyptian models. On this point all authorities on boat-building and navigation are quite emphatic. Those who theorize regarding the "proto-Phœnicians" overlook the fact that, as M. Montet reminds us, Byblos was during the Pyramid Age an Egyptian colonial port.

The bulk of the early sea trade with Crete does not appear to have been conducted by traders from Anatolia or the Greek mainland. During the First Early Minoan period Knossos on the north side of the island was a less important culture centre than Phæstos on the south, or even than certain eastern ports of Crete. About four centuries is assigned to this period which came to an end about 3000 B.C. The Second Early Minoan period was much longer, covering, it is estimated, about seven centuries, its later phase being contemporary with the Pyramid Age of Egypt. Ivory conoid seals, some in the form of apes, testify to trading relations with the Nile valley, as does also the ostrich egg

found at Palækastros. Figurines of alabaster, marble, and steatite, which were probably idols, have been unearthed at Hagia Triada, near Phæstos, and they are of very special interest and significance because they closely resemble similar objects from Nagada in Egypt, where they have a history dating back to pre-Dynastic times. Faience beads of a bluish green colour (the "vitreous paste" beads of British archæology), discovered on the Messara plain, at Gournia, and on the island of Mochlos on the north coast of Crete, are all of Egyptian type. Shallow bowls from Knossos closely resemble those of the Pyramid Age in the Nile valley.

Of special interest are the Minoan relics that point to the independent seafaring activities of the Cretan people. Liparite, a semi-crystalline rock which had been emitted, like obsidian, as lava, was imported from the Lipari islands to the north-east of Sicily and about 500 miles distant from Crete. This material was used to make shallow bowls of Egyptian type. Amber found on the Messara plain came from the Adriatic or from the Baltic. If it came from the shores of the latter, far-travelled seafarers may have imported it into Crete, for Baltic amber has been found by Siret among the relics of his "Easterners" in southern Spain. Sicily, Italy, and Sardinia were already being influenced by Ægean culture, but, no doubt, the prospectors went far beyond the areas in which traces of their early visits survive. Meanwhile, the Cyclades were receiving their pioneer settlers, who appear to have been Minoans. Melos especially was greatly favoured, chiefly on account of its deposits of obsidian, and perhaps, too, because of its flint. It is possible that Troy was reached at this time by the ancient Minoan mariners. The distance from Candia is about 350 miles—100 miles fewer than had to be covered to reach Sicily. A silver cylinder found at Mochlos suggests a commercial

connection with Mesopotamia, but it may have come through Syria, and not through Anatolia.

One of the notable discoveries of the Second Early Minoan Period is the hoard of jewellery from the island of Mochlos, which lies in the Gulf of Mirabello in North-eastern Crete. It includes finely-wrought gold diadems, rings, pendants, necklaces, &c., which Sir Arthur Evans compares with "the most refined fabrics of the Alexandrian goldsmiths of the Ptolemaic Age". A bracelet of gold bears a striking resemblance to one of silver found in the second city of Troy. Floral designs are somewhat similar to those of the Egyptian Dashur jewellery of a later period, while gold bands, or "diadems", two of which have incised eyes, are evidently prototypes of the well-known gold eye-masks of Mycenæ.

Associated with the Mochlos jewels were small stone vases, some of which were imitated by local craftsmen from Egyptian vases of the Pyramid Age. On a ring is an engraving of a ship with sail and oars. Like the Egyptian vessels of the period it has a high prow which would be caught by the wind and cause it to make leeway. The rowers had therefore to keep the ship's head up to the wind. As the early mariners could not tack with their square-sail ships, the masts of Mediterranean boats were, like those of the Nile boats, no doubt lowered when the wind was contrary.

To the same period are assigned the outstanding examples of mottled pottery from Vasiliki, a little inland town which appears to have been a centre of trade and administration. This pottery industry was of local development, but was evidently of Egyptian colonial origin, some forms being imitations of Egyptian models in metal.

The Third Early Minoan period endured for about three centuries—that is, from the time of the VIth till the early part of the XIth Egyptian Dynasty. A large number of finds

indicate continuous connection with Lower Egypt, while others emphasize that intimate relations existed between Crete and the Cyclades.

A notable feature of the period is the hypogæum, or underground circular bee-hive vault. At Knossos two hypogæa were constructed on the site subsequently occupied by the palace, during the construction of which they were filled in. One which has been excavated had been cut out of the soft rock. Apparently it had a domed roof. The spiral staircases of these vaults have been compared by Sir Arthur Evans to those enclosed in the walls of the Nuraghi of Sardinia and the Brochs of Scotland.¹ It would seem that the history of the Nuraghi and Brochs is to be traced back to the Cretan hypogæa, as that of the temples and pyramids of Egypt is to be traced back to the tomb of Pharaoh Khasekhemui of the IInd Dynasty. The seafarers who carried westward the elements of Ægean culture, appear to have introduced into constructions above ground, like the Nuraghi and Brochs, the distinctive features of the underground vaults of Crete. It is of interest to note in this connection that in the Brochs and the Nuraghi have been found lamps, square-mouthed vases, bracelets of stone, &c., suggesting an intimate cultural connection, although the Nuraghi are of the "Bronze Age", and the Brochs continued in use till the beginning of the Christian era, and some were occupied by Vikings. Survivals far from the area of origin are not, however, uncommon.

The Minoan hypogæa appear to have been storehouses. Sir Arthur Evans notes, in this connection, that domed underground storehouses were common in ancient Syria. The "clochans" of Ireland, the "Picts houses" of Scotland, and the underground "bee-hive" houses of England may have similarly been the "storehouses" of early agricul-

¹ *The Palace of Minos.*

tourists. Tacitus (*Germania*, Chap. XVI) refers to the German custom of making underground "caves", which were used as "storehouses" for crops and for refuges in winter, as well as for hiding-places when an enemy raided the country. The Sardinian Nuraghi and the Scottish Brochs were strongholds and "watch towers" as well as "storehouses", and of much more imposing character than the underground structures.

Various burial customs were practised during the Early Minoan Age of Crete. Cist graves have been found, as well as large stone-built tombs which were used as family or tribal burial places. Terra-cotta coffins (larnakes) which have rounded corners were used by some, while others used jars into which the corpses were "packed" in contracted position after being trussed. It may be that the various burial customs were introduced by intruders from different areas and were perpetuated by their descendants.

CHAPTER IX

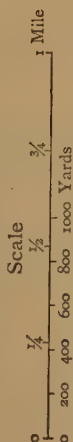
The Golden Age of Crete

Great Building Period—Temples of Egypt and Palaces of Crete—Immense Harbour Works near Alexandria—The Homeric “Safe Haven”—Egyptian Statue at Knossos—Disastrous Earthquake—New Palace of Knossos—Cretan Command of Sea—Palaces of Phæstos and Hagia Triada—Famous Art Relics.

The Middle Minoan period of Crete belongs to the “Golden Age” of the ancient world, for it coincides with the Middle Kingdom period of Egypt, the Hammurabi Dynasty of Babylonia, and the second city of Troy. It was the Age of great builders in Egypt and Crete, and between the two countries the relations were of quite an intimate character. Imposing temples and tombs were constructed in the Nile valley by the Theban Pharaohs of the XIth and XIIth Dynasties, and the early palaces of Knossos and Phæstos were erected in Crete. It was the Age, too, in which the enormous Lake Mœris scheme of irrigation was carried out in Lower Egypt by constructing a wall about 27 miles in length and reclaiming some 27,000 acres. To this period too, must apparently be assigned the construction of the early part of the great harbour works connected with the ancient island of Pharos at Alexandria. No Egyptian record of this undertaking has yet come to light, but we need not wonder at that, for the Middle Kingdom buildings of Egypt survive only in a fragmentary condition. It may be, however, that there is a reference to the harbour in the

Sketch plan to show the
Submerged Harbours
of

ALEXANDRIA



Submerged rocks & works shown thus:-----



poem in which Senusert III is extolled as "a rock barring the blast in time of tempest".

The discovery of the ancient harbour works was made by M. Gaston Joudet, engineer-in-chief of Egyptian ports and lighthouses. Owing to the sinking of the land in this area, the ancient works have long been submerged. There were originally two great breakwaters—the inner one enclosed a basin of about 150 acres, and the outer one a basin of about 80 acres. M. Joudet calculates that about 400 large galleys could have been sheltered in the inner basin alone. Beyond the outer basin was a "commercial harbour", the one chiefly favoured, no doubt, in calm weather. The works were carried out on the same big scale as the Lake Mœris scheme. Some of the blocks of stone weigh about six tons. An interesting fact, to which Professor Sir Arthur Evans has drawn attention, is that the paving of the great breakwater closely resembles that of the south-east corner of the west court of the Palace of Knossos in Crete. Evidently the harbour works and the old palace were constructed about the same time.¹

This ancient harbour of Pharos is referred to in Homer's *Odyssey*. The poet makes Menelaus say concerning his visit to the mouth of the Nile:

"Now there is an island in the wash of the waves over against Ægyptus (the Nile), and men call it Pharos, within one day's voyage of a hollow ship, when shrill winds blow fair in her wake. And therein is a good haven, whence men launch her gallant ships into the deep when they have drawn a store of deep black water."²

The Egyptian records regarding seafaring during the Middle Kingdom are scanty but significant. Voyages were

¹ M. Gaston Joudet, *Les Ports submergés de l'ancienne Île de Pharos* (Mémoires présentés à l'Institut Égyptien, 1916), and Sir Arthur Evans, *The Palace of Minos*, Vol. I, pp. 291 *et seq.* ² *Odyssey IV*, 354 *et seq.* (Butcher and Lang's translation, p. 59).

made to Punt (Somaliland) in large vessels which were constructed on the Red Sea, and are referred to in inscriptions. To the XIIth Dynasty is assigned the story of "the shipwrecked sailor" who set out in a vessel "150 cubits long and manned by 150 of the best sailors of Egypt". The supplies of timber required for ship-building were drawn from Lebanon. But other things besides timber were in demand and were procured.

The "good haven" at Pharos was visited by Cretan mariners, and the ports of Crete were, no doubt, visited by Egyptian mariners. Until the close of the Middle Minoan II period Crete's chief trade appears to have been with Egypt. The cultural connexion was undoubtedly close and intimate. There was probably "a colonial Minoan element," says Sir Arthur Evans, "on the soil of Egypt itself."¹ Among the Egyptian relics found at Knossos is a fragment of a diorite statue of a seated male Egyptian, whose name is given in a hieroglyphic inscription as Ab-nub-mes-Wazet-User. This monument is of Middle Minoan II date, and may have been that of an Egyptian ambassador resident in Crete, or of an Egyptian architect.

The earlier palaces at Phæstos and Knossos and the towns of Crete were destroyed at the close of the Middle Minoan period. It has been suggested that these disasters were due to a political revolution on the island, seeing that no trace of invaders has been detected, but Sir Arthur Evans favours the view that Crete suffered in the ancient days (c. 1600 B.C.) as Japan has recently suffered, from a great earthquake which was connected with the eruption on the island of Thera (Santorin), sixty miles distant. Thera is itself of volcanic origin, and some small islands near it were thrown up by eruptions in historic times. It may be that the memory of the great disaster is enshrined in the

¹ *The Palace of Minos.*

myths about Poseidon's hostility to Crete. That deity was not only the god of the ocean, but was the "earth shaker" who could raise islands from the bottom of the sea by means of his trident.

The first palace of Knossos, which was destroyed towards the close of the Middle Minoan period, appears, from the parts of it which have survived, to have had the features of a strongly fortified place. It may be, however, that its architectural style was really a survival. Perhaps the builders imitated the Egyptian Middle Kingdom strongholds, which enclosed temples and were erected on the frontiers, or the fortified palaces of the Theban Pharaohs, one of which was situated in the vicinity of Dashur in Middle Egypt. The palace of Knossos enclosed a sacred place which was evidently used as a temple. Minos was a priest-king, and his house was, no doubt, the "house of the god".

The new palace, erected on the site of the old, was a typical Cretan house on a large scale. It was quite open and undefended. The real defences of the island were its "wooden walls"—the ships of Minos which held command of the sea. Thucydides, the Greek historian, makes the following reference to the sea-power of Ancient Crete:

"The first person known to us by tradition as having established a navy is Minos. He made himself master of what is now called the Hellenic Sea, and ruled over the Cyclades, into most of which he sent the first colonies, expelling the Carians and appointing his own sons governors; and thus did his best to put down piracy in those waters, a necessary step to secure the revenues for his own use."¹

The Cretan houses of the undefended towns of Gournia, Palækastros, Knossos, &c., included bungalows and two- and three-storied buildings with flat roofs. The windows

¹ *The Peloponnesian War*, Book I, Chap. 4.



D 635

Photo. G. Maraghiannis, Candia, Crete

REMAINS OF THE PALACE OF KNOSSOS

Excavated by Sir Arthur Evans.

were glazed with some transparent material, and the doors opened on the street. Indeed, they strike quite a modern note. Some houses, as at Palækastros, were mainly of brick: others had rubble and gypsum walls, strengthened by beams of wood and faced with plaster.

The great terraced palace of Knossos, which was reconstructed and extended in the Middle Minoan III period, and added to later, was of more substantial construction. It was built on the side of the hill, and an outstanding feature of it was a paved central court, about 190 feet long and 90 feet broad, laid out on a cleared and level space above the Neolithic deposits on the hill's crest. It was reached from the lower buildings by a stately grand stairway in five flights with wide low steps, which Sir Arthur Evans has referred to as "the most daring exhibition of Minoan architectural enterprise". A complex of chambers, halls, and wandering passages was arranged on either side of the court. Another court—the west court—seems to have been "the meeting ground between palace and city". The rooms on the eastern slope were connected by staircases with the central court. The vast palace with its numerous passages, apartments, vaults, &c., must, when complete, have resembled somewhat that of the Tibetan Dalai Lama at Lhasa. In all probability it gave origin, as has been suggested, to the Greek legend of the Cretan Labyrinth which Daedalus, the inventor and architect, erected for Minos and in which the Minotaur was confined. Another "Labyrinth" was erected in the vicinity of Lake Mœris in Egypt during the latter part of the XIIth Dynasty, when the Fayum was the centre of administration and of the official religious cult which gave recognition to the various deities of the Nile valley and Delta, grouping them in accordance with the political needs of the time.

A wonderful drainage system of elaborate character

existed at Knossos. Nothing like it is found again anywhere until our own time and in this country. One of the Italian excavators has referred to it as "all' Inglese".

Glimpses of life and manners in Minoan Crete are obtained from the frescoes that adorned the palace apartments. The narrow-waisted men wore the short kilt, like the Old and Middle Kingdom Egyptians, carrying, as a rule, a dagger dangling from the waist, a necklace, and white leather boots. Women wore bell-mouthed and flounced skirts, jackets with breasts exposed, toques or hats, and hair elaborately dressed. As in Egypt, the males were usually depicted with red and the women with white skins, these being the conventional sex colours.

In the palace of Knossos the mother goddess, whose avatars were the snake and dove, was worshipped in a sacred shrine. The religious symbols included the double horns and the equal-limbed cross which was probably connected with the doctrine of the cardinal points.

Another great palace was erected and, after the Middle Minoan period, reconstructed at Phæstos on the Messara plain in south-central Crete. A great roadway, as Sir Arthur Evans has found, connected the two royal residences, but it is not certain whether these were occupied by rival monarchs, or whether the system of dual organization existed on the island as in Egypt, and had been developed on peculiarly Minoan lines. Near Phæstos was the smaller palace of Hagia Triada, in the ruins of which have been found the "Boxers", the "Warrior", and the "Harvesters" vases. The first named shows that "the manly art of self-defence" obtained on the island, and was included among the popular sports; the second affords a glimpse of military customs, while the third is of obscure character, depicting a procession of merry-making young men led by a priest, while one of their number shakes the Egyptian sistrum.

Whether or not the scene was connected with harvest or with tree-worship it is impossible to say. The ceremony had, no doubt, a religious significance.

Cretan art, like Cretan manners and customs, strikes a wonderfully modern note. It has none of the formalism so characteristic of Egyptian art, but a lyrical beauty or carelessness both in subject and execution which makes it appeal readily to modern eyes. In the frescoes, the pottery, &c., the artists went to nature for their subjects, but it would be hazardous to insist that their tendency in this connexion was wholly aesthetic and that no religious significance attached to such subjects as the octopus, the dolphin, the flying-fish, or the sea-shells. Shells were sacred objects in Ancient Egypt as far back as pre-Dynastic times, and they were sacred even in Upper Palæolithic times in Western Europe. The cowry and other shells were surrogates of the mother goddess, who was also connected, as was Demeter, with the dove and dolphin, and also with the serpent as was Demeter and as were certain Egyptian and Babylonian goddesses. Cult animals included the cow, the goat, the horned sheep, and probably the pig. Votive offerings were made in sacred caves. No doubt cave-ceremonies were associated with the legend of the child Zeus who was suckled in a Cretan cave by the animal form of the mother goddess and attended by the bee-goddess. Like Tammuz, Adonis, and Osiris, the Cretan Zeus was a "dying god"; his grave was connected with a sanctuary on the summit of Mount Juktas, which dates back to the Middle Minoan I period.

During the Middle Minoan period the art of writing received local development. To the Middle Minoan III period has been assigned the Phæstos disc with its mysterious hieroglyphics arranged in spiral form, which came from some part of South-western Asia Minor. The priestly scribes in various areas, following Egypt's example, were in the

habit of inventing their own hieroglyphic systems to suit local needs and languages and to render articulate to their own cults alone their particular mysteries and texts.

During the Middle Minoan III period, when the great palaces were reconstructed, the trade of Crete was in a flourishing condition. The intimate relations with Egypt continued during the Hyksos Age. Perhaps it was on that account that the idea of empire found favour on the island. At any rate, the political influence of the Minoan rulers was extended to the mainland of Greece where Cretan colonies were established. At Tiryns the oldest palace belongs to the latter part of the Middle Minoan III period or to the Late Minoan I period. The centre of Cretan administration was at Knossos, where a Minos ruled supreme, when this significant and imitative expansion took place.

CHAPTER X

Decline of Sea Kingdom

Last Phase of Minoan Civilization—Cretan Colonies in Greece—Rival Mariners on the Mediterranean—Sea-Power of Egypt—Egyptian Beads in England—Bead Links between Britain, Crete, and Egypt—The Purple Industry—Small Towns of Crete—Late Minoan Art—Egyptian Soldiers in Crete—Rise of Mycenæ and Tiryns—Cretan Disasters—Homeric Age—"The Peoples of the Sea"—Raids on Egypt—Famous Naval Battle—Coming of the Philistines—Siege of Troy—Sea Wanderers—Dark Age before Birth of Greece.

The Late Middle Minoan period began about the time when the Egyptians, having expelled their Hyksos overlords, established their brilliant XVIIIth Dynasty (*c.* 1580 B.C.), and it came to an end during the "Homeric Age" of Greece and Egypt's XXth Dynasty (*c.* 1200 B.C.). It thus covered the period of the great empire-building Pharaohs, Thothmes III and Amenhotep III, the critical times of Akhenaton and Tutankhamon, and the long prosperous reign of Rameses II of the XIXth Dynasty, at the close of which the "Peoples of the Sea" began to assert themselves not only in the Ægean, but on the Delta coasts of Egypt.

During Crete's Late Minoan I period the palace of Knossos was extended, and the Minoan colonies at Tiryns and Mycenæ on the mainland of Greece had been securely established. The mariners of Crete sailed as far westward as Spain and perhaps reached the British Isles, while they had constant commercial relations with Egypt and Troy. They even appear to have sailed up the Dardanelles

and coasted round the southern shores of the Black Sea. Pottery similar to that of Vasiliki and a seal-stone of Middle Minoan type were found by the Pumpelly expedition in Russia-Turkestan.¹ It may be that the Cretan merchants obtained supplies of tin from the South-eastern Caspian area as well as from Western Europe.

The Cretans were not, however, the only mariners on the Mediterranean. There were Trojan, Carian, Lycian, Cilician, and Syrian traders and pirates, vaguely remembered as "Phœnicians"—a term subsequently applied chiefly to the Tyrians and Sidonians alone—who had acquired their knowledge of boat-building and navigation from the Ancient Egyptian colonists. Withal, Egypt had its own great fleets as well as its own great harbour based on the island of Pharos.

During the XVIIIth Dynasty, and especially when Thothmes III, who died in 1447 B.C., was extending the Egyptian Empire in Western Asia and along the Eastern Mediterranean coasts, the Mediterranean Sea became "an Egyptian lake". The hymn of praise, in which the Theban priests made their god Amon address the great Thothmes, is found to contain the significant lines:

Keftew and Cyprus are in terror . . .
The circuit of the Great Curve (Okeanos)
Is enclosed in thy grasp.

Breasted, writing of the influence exercised by the great Thothmes, says:

"His sea power was such that the King of Cyprus became practically a vassal of Egypt, as later in Saitic times. Moreover, his fleet made him so feared in the islands of the north that he was able to exert a loose control over the Eastern Mediterranean, westward an indefinite distance to the Ægean. Thus his general

¹ Mrs. Hawes, *Gournia*, p. 33.

Thutiy includes ' the isles in the midst of the sea ' as within his jurisdiction as governor of the north countries; although his control will doubtless have consisted in little more than the reception of the annual gifts which the island dynasts thought it wise to send him."¹

It may be taken for granted, however, that an island power like Crete would not have cultivated the friendship of the ambitious Thothmes unless it had been found absolutely necessary to do so. The numerous and strong sea-going ships of Egypt's Empire period were not used for the transport of troops and war materials alone. During the reign of Queen Hatshepsut, the immediate predecessor of Thothmes III, an expedition, consisting of five large vessels, was dispatched from a Red Sea port to Punt (Somaliland) to bring supplies of precious metals, incense-yielding plants, &c., required for use in the temples. Although there are no records of similar expeditions to the Western Mediterranean, it does not follow that Egyptian seafarers lacked the skill and boldness to venture in that direction, and that Egypt was wholly dependent on Cretan and Phœnician "middlemen" for her supplies of metals, timber, &c. Is it likely that the native Egyptian seafarers made no use of the great harbour of Pharos except when troops were being dispatched to Syria? Surely the tutor of all early navigators was as enterprising as her pupils, and, when politically powerful, not above taking advantage of any discoveries made by her vassals who had ventured far westward to lands in which minerals were found. If the Cretans and Phœnicians reached Spain and England, is it likely that the Egyptians who visited Somaliland and ventured on the Indian Ocean, feared to face the perils of the Western Mediterranean and the Atlantic? For all we know the Egyptians themselves may have

¹ *A History of Egypt*, p. 305.

been the pioneer prospectors and explorers of western lands.

Of special interest in this connexion are the discovery of Egyptian relics in South-western England, and the significant discovery of amber in the tomb of Tutankhamon. The English Egyptian relics are copper-glazed beads (the "vitreous paste" of some archæologists). These "are met with plentifully in the Early Bronze Age tumuli of Wiltshire" and some come from Stonehenge. A necklace preserved in Devizes Museum is made up of Egyptian blue beads, and of beads of amber and jet. Professor Sayce insists that these cylindrical blue beads "belong to one particular period in Egyptian history, the latter part of the XVIIIth Dynasty and the earlier part of the XIXth Dynasty", while Dr. H. R. Hall, of the British Museum, says that he discovered at Deir el-Bahari in Upper Egypt, "thousands of blue-glaze beads of the exact particular type of those found in Britain". It is evident that the blue beads were, like those of amber and jet, of religious value to the settlers in South-western Britain.

The theory that these beads simply "passed up the trade routes" and were regarded by the ancient Britons as pretty novelties, is not convincing. The available evidence favours the view that the Egyptian blue beads reached Britain by the sea route from the Mediterranean. They must, withal, be considered in association with other finds of like character. Glazed beads, either green or pale, have been discovered in different parts of the British Isles. Some of these closely resemble in design and composition the glazed beads found in Crete, being similarly coloured in the interior as well as on the surface; they also resemble the glazed beads found in the silver-bearing district of Almeria in South-eastern Spain. Sir Arthur Evans, however, points out that "the star-shaped beads and the bulging segmented type" which

have been unearthed in Britain, are "derivatives of Egyptian prototypes", and are not represented in Minoan and Mycenæan deposits. This statement is of much importance. It is possible that the type of green or pale beads found in Britain was, like the pale-blue Devizes museum beads, introduced by Egyptian mariners. Had they been carried by Minoan mariners, they would surely have been imported into Crete as well as into Britain. "The possibility cannot be altogether excluded," comments Sir Arthur Evans in this connexion, "that some of the Faience beads found in the British Isles were of local fabric."¹

Some would have it that these Egyptian beads may have taken many years, and even centuries, to reach Britain. But, for all we know, they may have passed from Egypt to England in a few weeks. Periodic expeditions may have left Egypt to obtain supplies of metals, &c., from Cornwall and Devon, and there may have been colonies of Egyptian miners and artisans in South-western England. Egyptian colonies of like character were established elsewhere. The description of the Colchians given by Herodotus (Book II, Chap. 104) resembles the description of the Silures of Wales (the congeners of the people who gave their tribal name to the Scilly Isles) given by Tacitus (*Agricola*, Chap. 11). "The Colchians had," says Herodotus, "a more distinct recollection of the Egyptians than the Egyptians had of them." Tacitus refers to "the dark complexion and curly hair of the Silures" and suggests that they came from Spain, but in Spain there were colonies of Easterners who exploited its mineral wealth, and it is likely that the Silures, being settled in areas where metals were found, belonged to the same "caste" or race as the Spanish colonists.

In addition to Egyptians, Cretan, North Syrian, and

¹ *The Palace of Minos*, Vol. I, pp. 491-3, and 493 notes 5 and 6.

Anatolian prospectors and traders may have reached and left settlements in Ancient Britain.

One thing seems quite certain in connexion with these ancient beads found in England—the star-shaped and other beads of Egyptian design were in demand among men for whom they held a definite religious significance, just as does the cross for the Christians of modern times. They were not pretty playthings—mere “ornaments” which pleased rude barbarians.

There can be little doubt that the settlers from the East were responsible for establishing the Faience-bead industry in Britain. The skill displayed by the ancient British artificers in manufacturing the local beads of like design and composition to those found in the Early Bronze Age English graves, could not possibly have been of indigenous origin, nor could it have been acquired from Gaul, where no Egyptian beads have been found. Eastern artificers possessed of the necessary skill and knowledge required for the manufacture of such beads—an extremely difficult process—must have reached England. Before the native artisans appreciated the religious value of the beads and began to imitate Eastern methods in manufacturing them, they must have acquired Eastern religious beliefs and mixed them with their own, just as they mixed their own amber and jet beads with those imported direct from Egypt. There are undoubted traces in that complex known as “Celtic religion” of antique Eastern influence which could not have possibly “filtered along overland trade routes”. Among the interesting Celtic “survivals” in British folk-lore and mythology may be some of the concepts imported, like the Egyptian beads, by ancient alien prospectors and mariners. Pearls, for instance, which had anciently a religious value, were appreciated, searched for, and made use of in Ancient Britain long before they became fashionable in Rome.

That there were in Ancient Britain and Ireland organized communities, united by a religious bond, is made evident by those imposing engineering works, the stone circles at Stonehenge, Callernish (Lewis), Stennis (Orkney), and elsewhere, as well as the "shaft graves," &c., of Ireland and Scotland. The various megalithic structures of the British Isles were erected by organized and well-governed communities during the period when the cultural influences of the Mediterranean area were being carried to those places where prospectors had located deposits of metals and found also pearls, purple-yielding shells, amber, &c.

Purple-yielding shells are found along the coasts of Britain, and as far north as Lewis, the Orkneys, and the Shetlands. These shells, which possessed, because of the dye they contain, a religious and therefore a commercial value in ancient times, were fished for in Crete as far back as 1600 B.C. Apparently the Minoans made use of the famous shell-dye long before the Phœnicians of Tyre and Sidon began to establish their purple-dye works. Various purple-shell fishing grounds were subsequently located in the Mediterranean area. Traces of the purple industry have been found in South-western England, in the west of Ireland, and the north of Scotland. The Phœnicians obtained a "black purple", which was highly valued, from the British Isles.¹

During the Late Minoan period a number of small trading towns flourished in Eastern Crete. One of these was Gournia, which has been excavated by American archæologists. The oldest buildings date back till the Middle Minoan III period, but the town, as a whole, belongs to Late Minoan I. During the Egyptian XVIIIth Dynasty it was a busy centre, and evidently did a considerable trade. Its chief interest is that it throws much light on the life of its period. The

¹ Jackson, *Shells as Evidence of the Migrations of Early Culture*, pp. 9 et seq.

citizens lived in comfortable houses, and these included traders and artisans. A local governor resided in a small palace on the acropolis, which was built in Knossian fashion. Among the finds is the Late Minoan I octopus vase, which is one of the finest examples of Minoan painting. On the island of Pseira, which may have formerly been connected with the mainland of Crete, was a settlement where some beautiful pottery of Late Minoan I date was manufactured. No doubt it had its traders, as had Gournia.

The bay of the sea port of Palækastros, in Eastern Crete, is supposed to be "The Fair Havens" visited by St. Paul (*Acts*, xxvii, 6-8). Palækastros was a large but more rambling town than Gournia, and its houses were larger and of more massive construction. Near the town is the eminence of Petsofa, an ancient sacred site, where a large number of votive figurines have been unearthed. Models of males show that not only was the "kilt" worn, but also occasionally a shoulder plaid. The women favoured tight bodices and bell-shaped gowns, and the fashions in head-wear varied from toques to conical hats and trimmed "Dolly Vardens". A distinctive pottery was manufactured at Palækastros.

About eight miles distant was the sea-port of Zakros, which appears to have been founded early in Minoan history. The pottery fragments of Middle Minoan age which have been unearthed are, however, less numerous than those of Late Minoan I. Brick houses with stone foundations had plastered walls and concrete floors, and the number of apartments varied from two to six or eight, while one house had no fewer than fifteen. A large number of clay seal impressions dating from the Middle Minoan II and III periods have been found at Zakros, which was a flourishing trading port in the Late Minoan I period.

Among the famous artistic relics of the Late Minoan I period is the ivory figure known as "The Leaper" found

by Sir Arthur Evans at Knossos. It is much worn, but the hand and arm reveal exquisite craftsmanship.

An ivory and gold figure preserved at Boston, and supposed to have come from Knossos, belongs to the same period. The bronze, gold, and silver work of Late Minoan I reached a high pitch of excellence. Sir Arthur Evans has found at Knossos bronze vessels similar to those depicted in an Egyptian tomb as gifts from Crete to Queen Hatshepsut. The charming fresco of the "Cup-bearer", which, however, reveals faults in draughtsmanship, is likewise Late Minoan I. A similar conical "cup" is shown in an Egyptian tomb among the Cretan gifts of Thothmes III. Of great interest and importance is a Late Minoan fresco, in which Sudanese soldiers are depicted under the command of a Minoan officer, and which further emphasizes the close relations between Egypt and Crete. It was found in a Knossian villa by Sir Arthur Evans.

During the Late Minoan III period, the mainland centres of Mycenæ and Tiryns were of growing importance, while Corinth and Thebes appear likewise to have been fostered by Minoan influence. In Crete itself, a process of gradual decline in prosperity and art set in. It began with the fall of Knossos, which appears to have been due to an invasion from the mainland and to the establishment of Mycenæan supremacy in the Ægean area. The Argive Dynasty, with which Homeric tradition was to be so greatly concerned, had evidently come into existence, although the "Homeric Age" proper belongs to a later era. Cyprus was influenced by the sudden expansion from the Greek mainland. There, with the abruptness of an invasion, a Minoan settlement was effected. One view is that it was formed by refugees from Crete; another, that Cyprus was colonized from the Greek mainland by the conquerors who had overthrown the Knossian power.

After the sack of Knossos, there was a partial reoccupation of the palace, and a revival at Hagia Triada on the Messara plain as well as in the towns of Gournia and Palæakastro. But Minoan culture had lost its native force. Its finest expression in Crete during the later period was significantly in the manufacture of bronze weapons, an indication that the island was being subjected to the enervating perils of war. It may be that the mainland invaders established a new Dynasty in Crete. The tombs of the period indicate that the cultural influence of Egypt was operating afresh with Nilotic vigour.

During the Akhenaton-Tutankhamon age in Egypt the Cretan traders appear to have been displaced by those of Mycenæ. The Ægean pottery found at Tell-el-Amarna is of Mycenæan type, an indication that the mainland traders had succeeded in supplanting their island rivals not only in Egypt but in the Cretan ports.

In time, the ambitions of the mainlanders having grown with their wealth, their policy of expansion was directed against Egypt itself. During the reign of Merne-ptah, who succeeded Rameses II, the Libyans, as stated, assumed the offensive in the Western Delta, aided by a great force of maritime adventurers which included the Shardana, who were subsequently to give their name to Sardinia, the Akhaivasha, who have been identified with the Achæans, the Shakalsha and Tursha, probably Ægean peoples from Lycia and the Greek mainland, the latter being apparently connected with the Turseni who effected a settlement in Etruria. Merne-ptah achieved a victory, the casualties of the enemy numbering about 9000, of which a third were the seafarers from Europe and Anatolia. A Libyan revolution contributed to the joy and safety of the Egyptians. It is of special interest to find that the Egyptian army included forces of the Shardana and Danuana (? Danaans),

who thus fought against their own kinsmen. The raid on Egypt took place about 1230 B.C.¹

In 1196 B.C., during the Egyptian XXth Dynasty, when Rameses III was the Pharaoh, the "Peoples of the Sea" again attacked Egypt. They operated in conjunction with a force of land-raiders from Anatolia and North Syria and in agreement with the Libyans, who again threatened the Western Delta.

"The Isles were restless, disturbed among themselves," Rameses III recorded. He names the various allies, the Pulesti (Philistines), the Shakalsha (who gave their name to Syria), the Daanua (Danaans), the Tikkarai (from Zakro in Crete), and the Akhaivasha (Achæans), and indicates that they had overcome the Hittites, and effected the conquest of Cilicia, Carchemish, and Arvad and reached a centre in Palestine. "Their hearts," he adds, "were optimistic and full of schemes."

Rameses III mobilized a strong Egyptian fleet and also an army which included Shardana and other mercenaries. On his vessels were highly efficient archers, and forces of archers were distributed along the coast when he attacked the enemy. It is not certain where the battle between the raiders and the Egyptians took place—whether it was on the Eastern Delta coast or on the coast of Phœnicia. The enemy had visited Cyprus before the Egyptians came into touch with them.

Rameses was superior to the enemy both on sea and on land. His naval victory appears to have been due mainly to the fire of his archers, who riddled the enemy ships before they came within boarding distance. Apparently the Egyptian vessels had rams, for reference is made in inscriptions of Rameses III to the capsizing of the alien craft. "Their hearts are taken, their souls fly away," runs

¹ See also Chapter VI.

the record, "and their weapons are cast upon the sea. His (Rameses's) arrows pierce whomsoever he will among them, and he who is hit falls into the water."

Many of the enemy who swam ashore were slain by the land force. "They were dragged, overturned and laid low upon the beach; slain and made heaps from stern to bow of their galleys, while all their things were cast upon the waters, for a remembrance of Egypt."¹

The land-raiders were likewise defeated, and those that remained in Syria and Palestine had to become subject to Egypt. Prominent among these were the Philistines, who had bronze weapons, but subsequently acquired iron weapons and became the overlords of the Hebrews. They "cornered" iron in Palestine and disarmed their vassals. "Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel; for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears." (*1 Samuel*, xiii, 19.)

The Homeric war of Troy took place a few years after the disastrous raid on Egypt. According to Greek evidence, this war fell between 1194 and 1184 B.C. Homer's Troy is the "sixth city" of the archæologists.

Among the "Peoples of the Sea" who subsequently scattered westward were the Tursha who settled in Italy and were remembered as the Tyrrenians, and the Shardana who, as already stated, gave their name to Sardinia. The Shardana were probably the builders of the towers known as the "nuraghi" and already referred to. As stated, these structures resemble the brochs of Scotland, which, according to tradition, were erected by the Picts. There were no brochs in Ireland or England.

The Picts were a seafaring people. They recognized descent by the female line, as did the Ancient Egyptians and others, and their social organization was dual like

¹ Breasted's translation.

that of the Egyptians, Spartans, &c.; they were divided into Cats and Orcs (Boars). Their tribal name is P-Celtic, and is given both as Pict and Pect. Apparently they were a branch of the Pict-ones (or Pect-ones) who, according to Julius Cæsar, provided the Romans with vessels to fight against their commercial rivals, the Veneti, who traded with Britain, and were allied to other seafaring peoples along the English Channel coasts.

The Picts settled first in Orkney (called after the Orcs) and in Shetland (anciently "Isles of the Cats"). It may be that the earliest settlers came direct from the Mediterranean and erected the first brochs as they did the "nuraghi" of Sardinia. Later infusions may have been of mixed Sardinian and Celtic (or Celtiberian) stock who spoke P-Celtic and had adopted the name of Picts or Pects, owing to their connexion with the Pictones of Gaul.¹

The Scottish Picts established naval bases in the Orkneys and Shetlands, and gradually extended their sway as "military aristocrats" over the greater part of Scotland. Their brochs are most numerous in Northern Scotland, and are distributed as far south as Wigtownshire on the west and Berwickshire on the east. They must have dominated the northern sea route between Ireland and Scandinavia, for the Irish Gaels knew the western sea from Northern Ireland to the Orkneys as "Cuan nan Orc" (Sea of the Picts). The English Channel route between Ireland and Scandinavia, on the other hand, was dominated apparently by the Veneti. In Ireland the sea between that island and England and Wales was known as the "Sea of the Britons". Evidently, therefore, the Picts in the north and the Britons of the south were more influential at sea than some Irish historians and antiquaries would have us suppose.

After the Dorian invasion of Greece (about 1100 B.C.) a

¹ Professor W. J. Watson, *The Picts* (reprint of lecture), Inverness, 1921.
(D 635)

period of confusion and decadence set in throughout the area of ancient Ægean civilization. "The glory that was Greece" emerged in time, and, before the discoveries referred to in these chapters were made in Crete, the sudden rise of Greece seemed to historians to be, indeed, as they put it, "a miracle".

Ancient Mesopotamian Chronology

ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIAN CHRONOLOGY

Sumerians in Mesopotamia, before 3400 B.C.

[In *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol. I, the Sumerians are located in Sumeria as early as 5000 B.C. The dating according to this system is given as 'Camb.' and that of the late L. W. King as "King".]

Ur-Nina, first ruler of Lagash (during Egyptian Dynasty IV), 3000 B.C. (King); 3100 B.C. (Camb.).

Lugal-zaggisi, first Empire-builder, before 2800 B.C. (King); 2897 B.C. (Camb.).

Sargon of Akkad, 2650 B.C. (King); 2870 B.C. (Camb.).

Naram Sin (during Egyptian Dynasty VI), 2600 B.C. (King); 2795 B.C. (Camb.).

Gudea of Lagash, 2450 B.C. (King), 2600 B.C. (Camb.).

Ist Babylonian or Hammurabi Dynasty (parallel with Egyptian Dynasty XII), 2200 B.C. (Camb.).

Hammurabi's reign, 2123-2081 B.C. (Camb.).

Hittite raid on Akkad, 1926 B.C. (Camb.).

Kassite conquest of Babylonia (Hyksos conquest of Egypt given as 1800 B.C.), 1746 B.C. (Camb.).

Amarna-Kassite Age (Amarna letters), 1400 B.C.

Shalmaneser I of first Assyrian Empire, 1276-1257 B.C. (Camb.).

Second Assyrian Empire began with Ashur-natsir-pal III, 885 B.C.

Shalmaneser III began to reign, 860 B.C.

Tiglath-Pileser IV, 745-727 B.C.

Sargon the Later, 722-705 B.C.

Sennacherib, 705-680 B.C.

Esarhaddon, 680-668 B.C.

Egypt conquered by Assyrians, 672 B.C.

Ashur-banipal, 668-626 B.C.

Neo-Babylonian Empire established, 625 B.C.

Fall of Nineveh, 612 B.C. (Gadd).

Nebuchadnezzar II, 604-561 B.C.

Cyrus entered Babylon, 539-538 B.C.

Cambyes, 529-522 B.C.

Darius I, 522-486 B.C.

Xerxes, 486-465 B.C.

Battles of Thermopylæ and Salamis, 480 B.C.

Darius III, 338-330 B.C.

Alexander the Great died in Babylon, 323 B.C.

Seleucid Dynasty displaced in Babylonia, 236 B.C.

Pompey deposed Seleucids in Syria, 64 B.C.

Augustus regulated relations with Parthians, 30-29 B.C.

CHAPTER XI

Early Mesopotamian Civilization

The Irrigation Problem—Sumerians a Mixed People—Evidence of Skulls from Palestine to Punjab—Pre-Sumerian Settlers—Eridu a "Culture Cradle"—Ea and Osiris—Ship of the Culture God—Oannes Legend—Stone-working at Eridu—Stones imported from Shores of Red Sea—Early Contact of Sumerians and Egyptians—Wild Wheat—The Potter's Wheel—Turquoise and Lapis-lazuli Clues—Egyptian Contact with Caspian Area—Paradise of Dilmun—Land of the Date Palm—Date Tree and Fig Tree Symbolism—Clues from Art Motifs—An Invention is a "Sudden Jump"—Rapidly of Culture-drifting.

The early civilization of Sumeria in Southern Mesopotamia was, as has been indicated, based on the agricultural mode of life. Irrigation was practised, being an absolute necessity, but it had not been suggested by Nature, as was the case in the Nile valley and the Delta. The Egyptian inundation, as has been shown, leaves the valley drenched and fertilized at the beginning of the cool season, but both the swift Tigris and the slower Euphrates flood and retreat within their banks during the hot Mesopotamian summer. Soon after the rivers fall all vegetation is burned up and the valley, save where it is irrigated, becomes a bare and yellow waste.

The early agriculturists, who introduced into Southern Mesopotamia the system of irrigation, must have acquired their knowledge and skill from some other country. That country could not have been India, where the two great

ivers, the Indus and Ganges, rise in flood in early summer, nor could it have been China, where the river floods are caused by summer rains. "The incidence of the flood season," writes Professor Cherry, "is all in favour of Egypt as the place where the art of irrigation originated. On the Euphrates the preliminary requisites are an embankment to keep off the flood and a canal to bring water from the river at the proper time of the year."¹

It has been suggested that the earliest settlers in Lower Mesopotamia obtained their food supply chiefly from the date palm. If the Sumerians came from the north or northeast, it cannot be held that it was they who introduced that fruit-bearing tree. It flourishes in the south, and is rare in the old Assyrian area. Fish, dates, flesh, and corn appear to have been the food of the earliest settlers round the head of the Persian Gulf.

Who then were the earliest settlers in Lower Mesopotamia, and whence came they? At the dawn of history they are found to be the Sumerians. But the people nowadays referred to as Sumerians were not of pure racial type. They appear to have been early representatives of the blended population of broad-headed Armenoids from Anatolia, Armenia, and North Syria, and long-headed proto-Egyptians of the Mediterranean or Brown race. The Armenoid type had begun to drift into Egypt before the dawn of the Dynastic period, as a result, apparently, of the activities and movements of the Egyptian agriculturists who had set out on prospecting expeditions. The alien immigrants who settled in Egypt mingled and intermarried with the proto-Egyptians, and the distinctive alien characteristics of the skulls of the mixed population lead Professor G. Elliot Smith to refer to them as skulls "with Gizeh traits". This distinguished authority has detected Gizeh traits in

early skulls from Palestine, Asia Minor, South Russia, Mesopotamia, Iran, and the Punjab area of India. He also notes that Ripley and, long before that authority, Huxley, traced the early Egyptian racial type into Sumeria (Lower Mesopotamia) "and even farther east, into India, in fact". The evidence afforded by skulls, therefore, is in favour of the view that the earliest agriculturists of Lower Mesopotamia and Southern Persia included representatives of the Mediterranean or Brown race and those of the mixed Armenoid and Mediterranean races—the Gizeh type.¹

The Sumerians, as we find from the evidence of their sculptures, had prominent noses, which is a distinctive Armenoid trait, but Elliot Smith insists that some of the Sumerian heads "conform to the same racial type as the proto-Egyptians". The Sumerians shaved not only their faces but their scalps, while the Semites, a later blend of the broad-headed and long-headed types, favoured long beards like the pure Armenoids, and had fuller and fleshier lips and noses. The Arabians of Mediterranean racial type, who mixed with the Armenoids in Palestine and North Syria, preserved their language, which was Semitic. In Sumeria, however, the language was an agglutinative one, but whether it was that of the Armenoids, or one spoken in pre-Dynastic times in the Delta area of Egypt, is as yet uncertain.

There is not sufficient evidence to indicate whether or not the very earliest inhabitants of Southern Mesopotamia were of pure proto-Egyptian type, or were of the mixed Gizeh type. It would appear, however, that all the intruders did not enter Sumeria by the same route. There was a "drift" of mixed peoples from the north, another drift from Elam (Western Persia), and a drift round the shores of Arabia of seafarers from the Red Sea. The political control of Southern Mesopotamia had, at the dawn of history,

¹ G. Elliot Smith *The Early Egyptians* (2nd edition, 1923), pp. 146 *et seq.*

passed into the hands of the Sumerians, who may have been conquerors or simply in the majority.

According to Sumerian tradition their "culture cradle" was the city of Eridu, in which the god Ea was originally worshipped. Ea is the Semitic equivalent of the Sumerian name Enki. He was connected with water as a fertilizing agency, as was Osiris in Egypt. As Osiris was Neb-er-Zer (Lord of Everything), Ea was Nadimmud (God of Everything). A Sumerian text appears to refer to the ship of Ea in which were the god, his consort, his son (Marduk = Merodach), In-ab, the pilot of Eridu, and a god who was "the great architect of heaven". The text proceeds, according to Professor Pinches:

May the ship before thee bring fertility,
May the ship after thee bring joy,
In thy heart may it make thee joy of heart.

According to the traditions surviving till Greek times, the culture god, referred to by Berosus as Oannes, was "a creature endowed with reason, with a body like that of a fish, and under the fish's head another head, with feet below, like those of a man, and with a fish's tail". This deity came daily from the Persian Gulf and instructed the people how to cultivate cereals and fruit-trees, to build houses and temples, to frame laws, to cultivate the art of letters, &c.

Eridu, which has been located at Abû Shahrain, was situated on a sandstone ridge on the shore of a fresh-water lake to which access was obtained from the Persian Gulf by one of the mouths of the Euphrates. There stone was used for building, a distinguishing and notable feature of the city, because elsewhere in the Tigro-Euphrates valley, except at Ur, brick only was used. This fact suggests that the earliest settlers came from an area where stone was

regularly worked. The temple tower (ziggurat) was faced by a retaining wall of local stone, but polished marble was built into the tower itself, which had a marble stairway. The marble was imported, as were also quantities of granite, basalt, and diorite. Mr. J. E. Taylor, who excavated the mounds of Mukayyar (Ur) and Abû Shahrain in 1854 and 1855, found in the latter gold-headed and copper nails. Evidently the early worshippers of Ea were familiar with the working of metals.

Like the early Egyptians, the Sumerians attached an arbitrary religious value to gold, as they did to pearl-shell which was used to represent the eyes of the images of sacred animals. Pearl-shell was used in Egypt for the eyes of early mummies—a custom that ultimately spread far eastward with the practice of mummification.

Pearl-shell and pearls were found in the Persian Gulf and copper in the highlands of Elam (South-western Persia). Teak, which has been detected at Eridu, may have come from India, but this is uncertain. There can be no doubt, however, that the alabaster or aragonite, and the granite and diorite imported into Eridu came from the shores of the Red Sea. The basalt was fetched either from the same region, or from the upper reaches of the Tigris. Cedar was obtained from Syria, and, it may be, copper, as well as stone, came from Sinai. The copper of Sinai is naturally harder than that of Persia. After discovery had been made that copper could be hardened by mixing it with tin, the earliest supplies of which came from Khorassan in Persia, the demand for Sinaitic copper may have fallen off.

It is possible that the Sumerians and the Egyptians were more in contact during the early Eridu period than they were in later times, for both peoples visited Lebanon, Sinai, and the shores of the Red Sea. In fact, Eridu may have been founded by seafarers who were attracted by the pearl-shell

and pearls of the Persian Gulf, as well as by the copper deposits of Elam. The fact that they used stone for building suggests that they had close association with the greatest stone-workers in history, the Ancient Egyptians. The evidence regarding race types certainly favours the opinion that the people who founded the Sumerian civilization were the congeners of the proto-Egyptians and had come into contact with the same alien Armenoids who had "drifted" into the Delta area and the Upper Nile valley.

Some urge the view that the Sumerian intruders from the north found already settled at Eridu a seafaring people whom they absorbed, as they themselves were absorbed at a later period by the Semites. The seafarers may have introduced Egyptian barley. Wheat, as Professor Breasted reminds us, retained in Sumeria its Egyptian name. The wild wheat of Mesopotamia (*Triticum monococcum*) has peculiarities, as Professor Biffin, Cambridge, finds, which make it almost useless for harvesting, because the seeds fall from the ears in succession as soon as they ripen; nor will this Mesopotamian wheat cross with any of the cultivated varieties. Similar sickles were used by the Sumerians and early Egyptians.¹

Those who favour Elam as the culture-cradle of both Sumeria and Egypt are confronted by the difficulty that at Susa the most ancient pottery was wheel-made. They overcome it, however, by insisting that the potter's wheel was not, as has been hitherto believed, an Egyptian invention, but that it was an Elamite invention. Definite proof of such a contention has yet, however, to be obtained. It is not sufficient in this connexion to point to the fact that the wheeled chariot was in use in Babylonia before it reached Egypt. The wheel was not necessarily invented in the area where it was first adopted for carts. It was an old solar symbol and metal forms of it may have suggested the wheel.

¹ See Chapter I.



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Photo. Mansell

EGYPTIAN IVORY KNIFE HANDLE

Found at Gebel-el-arak: now in the Louvre, Paris. A pictorial record of the early relations of Sumeria and Egypt.

At Anau in Russia-Turkestan, where a pottery similar to that found in Susa has been unearthed, other evidence of an interesting and suggestive kind has come to light. There the turquoise had a magico-religious value. In the earliest culture strata of Anau were found beads of turquoise, carnelian, and lapis-lazuli. Turquoise does not appear to have attracted the Sumerians, or the later Babylonians. "Egypt," as Laufer reminds us, "is the only country in the Old World which may lay claim to a great antiquity in the utilization of the turquoise mined in the Sinai mountains."¹ Lapis-lazuli was used by the Sumerians in association with mother-of-pearl and precious metals. When the Chinese acquired knowledge of it, they called lapis-lazuli *kin tsin* ("essence of gold"). The Egyptians, as has been shown, used carnelian, turquoise, and lapis-lazuli for beads even before Dynastic times. They could not have obtained real lapis-lazuli nearer than the Caspian area in which Anau is situated.²

The chronology of Anau is uncertain, but the third culture detected there has yielded evidence of contact with Sumeria. It is possible that the influence of Egypt reached Anau at an earlier period than did the Sumerian. The turquoise clue is certainly of very special importance in dealing with the priority of cultural influence.

While the Sumerians regarded Eridu as a specially sacred city where Ea-Oannes figured as a culture god, they located their Paradise at Dilmun, in the Persian Gulf. A French excavator has found on the island of Bushire fragments of thin pottery similar to the thin pottery of the lowest cultures of Susa, Eridu, and Ur. Here again the influence of early seafarers is suggested. Dilmun is also referred to as "the land of the date palm". Like the sycamore fig of Egypt, this tree yields a milky fluid, and it was similarly, on that

¹ *Notes on Turquoise in the East* (Chicago, 1913), p. 37.

² See Chapter II.

account, associated with the mother goddess and with various cult animals, after agriculture had been introduced.

Other early links between Egypt and Mesopotamia include the cylinder seal, certain art motifs of religious significance, burial customs, myths, beliefs connected with water as the source of all life, &c. Budge is of opinion that the Sumerians and early Egyptians derived their primeval gods from a common and "exceedingly ancient source".¹ But Langdon would have it that the Sumerians were "the most talented and humane of early peoples", and the originators of civilization. "The entry of the Sumerians into Mesopotamia and Egypt," he declares, "heralded the dawn of civilization in the ancient world."²

Campbell Thompson, however, insists on the settlement in Elam and Southern Mesopotamia of a pre-Sumerian people whom he brings from the East. "As the Sumerians invaded the land from the north, these settlers died out or were absorbed in the conquering race."³

Two art motifs may be referred to as evidence of a migration of seafarers from the Red Sea. One depicts two animals or reptiles in heraldic opposition, "separated by a tree or other object". In Egypt the opposed animals symbolized the union of the "Two Lands" which was accomplished before the complete conquest credited to Mena, and therefore before the "larger Egypt" came into existence. The other is the bird-and-serpent symbol which has been found in Elam and at Nippur in Sumeria. Langdon regards the eagle as "the bird of the sun-god", and the serpent as "representative of the powers of darkness". In the Babylonian myth of Etana, however, which dates back to Sumero-Akkadian times, the serpent appeals to the

¹ *Gods of the Egyptians*. Vol. I, 290. ² *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol. I, p. 462.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 496, 497.

sun-god Shamash for protection against the Eagle, the reason for this being given in the myth, which states:

The Eagle opened his mouth and spake unto his young, saying,
The young of the Serpent will I eat.

The sun-god is angry and instructs the serpent how to destroy her enemy.

This myth is found at a much later period in Hindu mythology, having apparently "drifted", with much else, across the Iranian plateau, if not across the sea. Garuda, the monstrous Hindu "eagle", preys on the nāgas (serpent deities), which are rain-givers connected with rivers, lakes, and the sea. De Visser has traced the connexions between the Hindu nāgas and the Chinese dragons.¹ The bird-and-serpent "art motif" ultimately reached Polynesia and pre-Columbian America. In Ancient Egypt it was connected with the Horus-Set feud, Horus being the bird and Set the serpent.

The bird which consistently preys on serpents is the African secretary bird. It is specially equipped by Nature to kill them and, if necessary, to wage a successful struggle with them. Ancient mariners who visited Punt, as did the Egyptians, must have been impressed by the sight of these great birds flying through the air, and carrying snakes in their beaks. They resemble eagles, but have very long legs and powerful webbed feet, and they usually kill snakes at the first blow. It is more probable that the bird-and-serpent myth was suggested by the secretary bird than that the Elamites and Sumerians should have imagined a special type of eagle which displayed the characteristics of that distinctive secretary bird. The early settlers in Elam and Sumeria who coasted round to the Persian Gulf from the Red Sea, may well have introduced the bird-and-serpent

“art motif” which subsequently spread to distant lands never reached by the secretary bird itself.

When we find archæologists disagreeing as to the area in which civilization had origin, we can turn for evidence to other scientists possessed of special knowledge. As has been shown, the agricultural scientist favours Egypt because there the barley evolved from a wild grass into a cereal with seeds plump enough to attract the attention of man. There, too, the farmers began to operate simply by “helping the river” by extending the area of natural irrigation. Man simply assisted the Nile “to do the business just a little better”, as Professor Cherry puts it, “than it had been doing before his arrival.”

Professor Cherry emphasizes a very important point in dealing with the social revolution effected by the introduction of the agricultural mode of life. “Cultivation,” he writes, “is like the use of fire—the invention is a sudden jump, and not a gradual change. A people either tills the soil or it does not, and if it cultivated anything in the Ancient Orient we may be sure that it knew something of millet and barley. The limited time which is available for the spread of this knowledge all round the world is forgotten, and was not known to early writers on the subject. Because man of the Old Stone Age lived apparently as a non-progressive being, perhaps for hundreds of thousands of years, it was assumed that civilization took a correspondingly long period to evolve.”¹

The spread of culture was due mainly to “teaching”. No natural law impelled widely-separated communities to make the same discoveries and achieve spontaneously and independently the same degree of progress. Either Egypt was at the beginning influenced by Mesopotamia, or Mesopotamia was by Egypt. As civilization was based on the

¹ *The Discovery of Agriculture*, p. 20.

agricultural mode of life, the claim urged on behalf of Egypt as the " culture cradle " is one which explains much, uniting, as it does, the various threads of evidence, and emphasizing the important part played by human experience in the formation of religious beliefs, myths, and practices.

CHAPTER XII

Rise of the Warrior Kings

Antediluvian Kings—The Mythical Ages of Babylonia and India—Early Dynasties—Pre-Sargonic and Sargonic Kings—Rise of Semites—The First Empire—Naram Sin—Gudea of Lagash—Sea-trade in Persian Gulf—The Last Sumerian Rulers.

In Sumeria as in Ancient Egypt we meet with lists of antediluvian kings. One Sumerian list gives 134 kings from the Deluge to the eleventh king of the Isin Dynasty, with a total of 28,876 years. Berosus, a priest of Babylon in Greek times, refers to ten antediluvian kings who reigned during a period calculated to have lasted for 120 *sars*. A *sar* was 3600 years, so that the length of this Age was 432,000 years. Kings reigned for 1200 years in the 1st Dynasty of Kish and the 1st Dynasty of Erech.

It is evident that these calculations were the work of the priestly arithmeticians who had equated space and time. As some of their antediluvian kings were gods, including Tam-muz and Gilgamesh, those ancient scholars arrived at the lengths of their mythical reigns by making calculations which had probably a religious significance.

In Babylonian arithmetic 6 (apparently the six parts of the body—arms, legs, trunk, and head) and 60 (six multiplied by the ten fingers) were important numbers. Twice 60 gave 120. The Zodiac was assumed to extend 120 degrees, and a reign of 1200 years (120×10) had therefore evidently a connexion with doctrines which remain obscure.

When the Hindus adopted the system of Yugas (Mythical Ages) they assumed that the one of shortest duration was Kali Yuga which embraced 1200 years, the next was Dvapara Yuga of 2400 years; then came the Treta Yuga of 3600 years, and finally Krita Yuga of 4800 years. In each case 1200 was added to the length of the preceding Yuga, but in the Hindu system the longest Yuga was placed first, the shortest being last. The four Yugas (12,000 years) represented a Maháyuga, which was simply the Babylonian 120 *sars* multiplied by 100.

As a Babylonian *sar* was a divine year, so was an Indian Yuga year. According to the Hindu view, each day of the gods was a year to mortals. Multiplied by 360, therefore, the 12,000 years of a Maháyuga equalled 4,320,000 human years. The Babylonian *sar* (3600 divine and 432,000 human years) was thus made more impressive. The Maháyuga multiplied by 1000 gave a " Day of Brahma " as 4,320,000,000 human years.

The " long arm " of Babylonian culture stretching through India, reached as far distant as Mexico in pre-Columbian times. Mexico, like India, had its four Mythical Ages, originally suggested by the four cardinal points. The first age in both India and Mexico was supposed to have lasted for 4800 years (1200×4).¹

It is quite evident that no chronological importance can be attached to the Sumero-Babylonian lists of antediluvian kings, although certain of these kings really existed. In dealing with the early city Dynasties, it has to be recognized that the desire to establish the antiquity of a reigning family found expression by connecting it with groups of deities and therefore with doctrines that had been influenced by the pioneer arithmeticians and astrologers who had assigned a magical significance to numbers. A clear and persistent

¹ See my *Myths of Pre-Columbian America*, pp. 64 *et seq.*

tradition which survived, however, was the association of Eridu with the birth of civilization. Long after the city and its school had sunk into oblivion, the city god continued to be revered. "So necessary," writes Langdon, "was his cult to the practice of religion that every city possessed a temple or chapel to Enki or Ea."

When the curtain is raised in southern Mesopotamia, the first act of the historical drama is already over. The Sumerians are found to be in occupation of a group of southern cities on the Biblical "plain of Shinar", while to the north of this plain another group is occupied by the Semitic Akkadians. It may be that the Sumerians held sway in the Akkadian area before the Semites arrived. The permanent union of Sumer and Akkad was achieved at a much later period than the union of Upper and Lower Egypt (the "Two Lands").

According to the Babylonian scribes, who, about 2000 B.C., drew up lists of the early kings of Sumer and Akkad, the Ist Dynasty after the flood flourished at Kish, the second at Erech, and the third at Ur.

Recent excavations at Ur have revealed that during its Ist Dynasty stone was used for building, as at Eridu. A small temple of the mother goddess was erected on a raised platform, "approached," as Major Woolley tells, "by a flight of stone steps, and with a façade of extraordinary richness. Tumbled down against the platform wall we have found a whole series of reliefs which decorated the temple front; chief of these was a frieze of cattle, their bodies hammered out of copper plates and their heads cast in the same metal, and inset. The animals are all lying down, seen in profile, with their heads turned out to face the spectator. They are eleven inches high by twenty-two inches long. The treatment of the heads is remarkably realistic, and as works of art these must rank amongst the

antiquities of all lands. Then there are copper statues of standing oxen, worked in the round, which stood up against the base of the wall, and connected with them are masses of large artificial flowers made of clay, with inlaid petals. A marble tablet was discovered inscribed in Sumerian which records that this was the temple of the Goddess Nin-Khur-sag, built in her honour by the King of Ur, Aannipadda." Another frieze "was composed of figures of men and oxen carved in fine white stone and silhouetted against a background of black paste, the whole framed in copper; yet another showed birds, similarly treated in black and white. One part of the building was decorated with copper statues of bulls in the round, a little over two feet high. . . . The wealth of metal lavished on this little temple is astonishing." An inscription states that the temple was erected by King A-an-ni-pad-da, son of King Mes-an-ni-pad-da of the Ist Dynasty of Ur.

The early kings remain shadowy, and the lengths of reigns and of Dynasties obscure. Records which are not contemporary cannot always be relied upon; one never knows whether the priest or the politician had been at the elbow of the historians of old. There appears, however, to be little doubt that a governing class came into existence, perhaps in consequence of a conquest, and that Dynasties flourished and decayed. The Sumerians may have been, as some assume, the earliest conquerors. In time they gave way to the Semites. The Sumerian language remained the language of culture and religion. It was apparently during the Sumerian period that imported beliefs and customs assumed a distinctively local complexion.

One of the early rulers who emerges from the shadows is Ur-Nina of Lagash. He fortified his city—a significant act—repaired and erected temples, and promoted agriculture by cutting canals. On a limestone plaque preserved in

the Louvre, Paris, he is seen engaged in a temple-foundation ceremony. On his shaven head he carries a basket containing clay, or the first brick; his face is shaved and he wears the characteristic Sumerian kilt. Five figures, one a female, accompany him.

Ur-Nina's son had to wage war against raiders. He was followed in succession by Eannatum, who defeated an invading army from Elam and became an overlord of a group of cities including Erech and Ur. The king of the Semitic city of Opis came against him, but was taken captive. Entemena, a later king of Lagash, completely subdued Opis, slew its ruler and placed it under the governorship of one of his officials. After a prosperous reign of twenty-nine years, Entemena died and was succeeded by Eannatum II, the last king of the Ur-Nina Dynasty. A revolt brought Lagash under the leadership of priestly rulers. For a time Barnamtarra, a queen regent, held sway. Ultimately an aristocrat named Urukagina came to the throne. He appears to have been a leader of a political movement which was directed against the military and official classes. The people were heavily taxed, and the "reformer" not only lightened their burden but introduced laws which protected agriculturists and traders. The citizens of Lagash became freemen, and the priests and lords no longer laid violent hands on their possessions. Although he reigned for only six years, Urukagina carried out a great deal of temple-building and effected the reconstruction of a dam and canal which supplied Lagash with water.

Disaster suddenly fell upon the city, which was invaded, plundered and destroyed by Lugal-zaggisi, son of the priest king of Umma. This conqueror also seized Kish and Nippur, established himself at Erech, and became the overlord of Sumeria. He appears also to have brought Akkad under his sway. An inscription credits him with

having, indeed, extended his conquests from the Lower Sea (the Persian Gulf) to the Upper Sea (the Mediterranean). He was one of the first great empire-builders.

After reigning for a quarter of a century Lugal-zaggisi was deposed by that famous Semitic "Napoleon", Sargon of Akkad. Unlike the clean-shaven Sumerian rulers, Sargon wore a heavy beard. He does not appear to have been of royal descent. According to the legend of his birth, he had been as a child set adrift by his mother, a priestess of the sun-god, in a reed-boat, like the Hindu Karna, Perseus, and other heroes. He was found and brought up by a gardener and lived in obscurity until the Goddess Ishtar caused him to prosper. For a time he served as gardener and watchman in a temple at Kish. The ruler of Akkad had been deposed by Lugal-zaggisi, and Sargon ultimately became so powerful in that centre that he waged war against his overlord, deposed him and then reigned as a great king or emperor for over half a century. Not only did he conquer Sumeria, but successfully invaded Elam, which appears to have become subject to him. Then he turned attention to the Amorite land in the west, and subdued it. A reference to his crossing the "Western" or "Upper" Sea (the Mediterranean) seems to indicate that he reached an island which some have identified as Cyprus, and Winckler thought was Crete. A stele of a successor, Naram Sin, has been found in Cyprus. Three subsequent invasions of the Amorite land are also referred to. In an inscription from Nippur, Sargon is credited with having possessed himself of the forests of cedar, which may be the Lebanons, and the "silver mountains", which may be the Taurus in Asia Minor. According to Sayce, Sargon's conquests in the west embraced Cappadocia, Syria, and Cilicia. A revolt in Elam caused the war-lord to invade and desolate the city of Kazalla. According to a record, Kazalla was

left in ruins; even "the resting places of the birds" were destroyed. Langdon thinks that Kazalla was situated east of the Tigris in the latitude of Baghdad.

When Sargon was an old man, his enemies rose in revolt against him. He was besieged in Agade (=Akkad), which he had founded, but he claimed to have sallied forth and won a victory.

Rimush (Urumush), who succeeded him, subdued the rebels, including the Elamites, and ruled from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean.

The next king was Manishtusu, apparently a son of Sargon's. He had to deal with a rising of thirty-two city kings to the south of Elam. In Sumeria he came to terms with the powerful rulers of Lagash and Umma, appointing their sons to official positions. He also made large purchases of land.

The next Sargonic king was the famous Naram Sin. He appears to have been a second Sargon. A beautiful sandstone "Stele of Victory", which was subsequently carried off to Susa, where it was discovered by archæologists, depicts an invasion of a mountain country. The enemy are overthrown and submit to the king. Some trace in this wonderful work of art the influence of Egypt. Apparently the campaign was waged to the east of the Tigris among the Zagros Mountains. The Sumerian priest-lords (patesis) continued to rule in the cities of the south, but owed allegiance to Naram Sin, to whom they paid tribute in precious metals, grain, animals, fish, and salt. These cities also provided bands of workmen. Naram Sin was a great builder, and reconstructed or established temples at various centres. He reigned, like Sargon, for over half a century, and was succeeded by his son Sharkalishari, who reigned for about twenty-five years. He, too, had trouble with the Elamites of the south-east, and the Amorites of the west. On the

east of the Tigris and north of Elam a people known as the Gutium, against whom Sargon and Naram Sin had waged war, were becoming more and more aggressive and powerful. It may be that they were related to the Hittites. Some, however, are inclined to connect them with the Iranians of Indo-European speech, as Mitannian names are found in their region at a later period. They were a constant threat to the civilization of Akkadia and Sumeria, and ultimately they succeeded in imposing their rule over the richest area of the empire established by Sargon. Several cities, including Nippur and Erech, had cause to lament the oppression of the barbarian highlanders.

The Dynasty established by the Gutium, one of whose kings was named Sharlak, is believed to have endured for a century and a quarter. Later kings were converts to the Sumerian religion. Larisab and others appear to have recognized the old gods and allowed Sumerian patesi (priest-kings) to govern the southern cities. At Lagash the patesi Gudea became powerful and influential. He erected temples and appears to have exercised some sway over Elam, from which country, as well as from Lebanon, he received timber. His ships plied in the Persian Gulf, and brought him copper, gold, &c., from Magan and Melukhkha, which in later times were names for Egypt and Ethiopia. It may be that Magan was a region on the Red Sea and that Melukhkha was the country known to the Egyptians as Punt. Marble was obtained from the "Amorite mountain" and conveyed down the Euphrates on rafts. Several statues of Gudea have been recovered, but only one is complete. It depicts a vigorous and cultured man in a religious attitude. He appears to have reigned for about four decades. Little or nothing is known regarding a son who succeeded him.

An Erech Dynasty afterwards came into prominence. It consisted of three kings, the first being Utukhegal, who

was credited with having driven the Gutium rulers out of Sumer and Akkad.

Ur became next the seat of Sumero-Akkadian power. Ur-Engur appears to have been a conqueror like Sargon. His empire extended from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf. An interesting reference is made to a visit paid by his ships to a land unknown to the Sumerians before his time. Unfortunately it cannot be located.

Ur-Engur was succeeded by his son Dungi, one of whose daughters married an Elamite ruler owing allegiance to Ur. Northern Mesopotamia, a considerable area to the east of the Tigris, and the western land, including Northern Syria and Cappadocia, were included in the empire ruled by Dungi.

The Dynasty of Isin followed that of Ur, which had endured for over a century. It came into existence with Elamite co-operation, and its kings were Semites. Another Semitic family rose into prominence at Larsa. With the fall of Ur the political sway of the Sumerians came definitely to an end (*c.* 2300 B.C.).

CHAPTER XIII

Race-mixing in Sumeria

Need for Farm Workers—Ancient Contracts—Aliens in Politics—Prospectors and Traders—Demand for Metals and Stones—Jade from Chinese Turkestan—Invention of Bronze—Colony of Mine Workers—"Tin Land" Beyond the Sea—Voyages to Spain—Mystery of Malta—Hittites and Aryans—Amorites in Babylon.

The influence exercised in Western Asia by what is known as Sumerian civilization was not due merely to conquest. It was being disseminated, as a matter of fact, long before the days of the empire-builders and it went farther than ever did the warriors of Mesopotamia. Contact between the Sumerians and various backward peoples was brought about, in the first place, by the ever-growing need of the rich irrigated valley for agricultural labourers. As the cultivated area was being extended more and more, the harvesting problem became increasingly difficult. Crops were plentiful but the labourers were few. The wheat and barley ripened almost in a day in the fertile and compact valley, and aliens had to be enticed to work in the rich harvest fields. This problem of farm labour was ever, indeed, a pressing one in Southern Mesopotamia. As much is indicated by the contract tablets that have come down to us. Mr. Johns tells that a farm worker might be "hired for the harvest" but "was free directly after". There are also examples "in which the term of service was different—one month, half a year, or a whole year. Harvest labour was probably dearer

than any other, because of its importance, the skill and exertion demanded, and the fact that so many were seeking for it at once.”¹ The steady and regular influx of labourers into Sumeria caused the formation in cities of those foreign quarters to which references are occasionally made. In the process of time these aliens and their descendants exercised far-reaching influence in political life.

Another cause which led to the diffusion of civilization was the ever-growing demand for metals and precious and semi-precious stones, for timber, &c. The city rulers were patesis (priest-kings); consequently palace and temple were closely associated, and it was from the temples that the demand for metals chiefly emanated. As in Egypt, gold and silver had a religious value and had to be searched for far and wide. Copper, which came into use at first mainly for magico-religious purposes, was required for implements also, and, after warfare became common, for weapons. It has been shown that metals, stone, timber, &c., were imported by way of the Persian Gulf from the shores of the Red Sea, from some part of East Africa (perhaps the Punt of the Egyptians), and from Persia. There were also imports from Syria, Anatolia, Armenia, and the Persian Highlands to the north-east. The conquests achieved by warrior kings like Lugal-zaggisi, Sargon of Akkad, and Naram Sin were no doubt made for the purpose of procuring, by trade and by tribute, abundant supplies of materials for temple construction and equipment. It was a religious necessity that gold and silver should be used to adorn temples and statues of the gods, that images of stone and metal should be set up, and that precious and semi-precious stones should be accumulated in sacred places and worn by believers. The semi-precious stones were used also in business. Cylinder seals, for instance, are found to be of “marble, jasper, rock-

¹ Johns, *Babylonian and Assyrian Laws, &c.*, pp. 371-2.

crystal, emerald, amethyst, topaz, chalcedony, onyx, agate, lapis-lazuli, hæmatite, and steatite " and also " of jade ".¹ The jade was, it would appear, obtained from Khotan in Chinese-Turkestan, which was far beyond the bounds of the empire of Sargon. A religious value had evidently been assigned to jade at an early period, and in this connexion it is of interest to find that the Chinese, who appear to have been indirectly influenced by Sumerian civilization even before they settled in Shensi province, regarded jade as of similar religious value to gold, silver, pearls, and cowries.²

In Anatolia, Syria, and the Transcaspian area Sumerian and Egyptian cultural influences continuously met and mingled. It may be that the Sumerians themselves had been influenced by Egyptian civilization before they migrated to Southern Mesopotamia from the upper reaches of the Tigris and Euphrates, and absorbed the colonies founded by seafarers at Susa and Eridu. Copper, as has been noted, was found in Elam, as well as imported from Sinai. But in time the Armenian and Anatolian sources were drawn upon. Tin appears to have been obtained " at Khorassan and in other parts of Persia near Asterabad and Tabriz; . . . from such areas as these," writes Sir Hercules Read, " the tin used in casting the earliest bronze may have been derived." ³

Apparently bronze was first manufactured by the Sumero-Akkadian colonists, in Northern Mesopotamia. The carriers of bronze into Europe also carried jade. Copper, tin, and jade were searched for and found in Europe by the early prospectors who had learned in Asia how to find and use them. " If," writes Laufer, " bronze was bartered from the Orient into the northernmost parts of Europe, if Prussian

¹ *British Museum Guide to the Babylonian and Assyrian Antiquities*, pp. 156-7.

² De Groot, *The Religious System of China*, Vol. I, pp. 270 et seq.

³ *British Museum Guide to the Antiquities of the Bronze Age*, p. 9.

amber found its way to Italy, Greece, and anterior Asia, and if obsidian was everywhere propagated by trade, it is reasonable and logical to conclude that the same opportunities were open to jade.”¹ The “Kurgans” of the Transcaspiian area have revealed, as has been noted, evidence of connexions with Southern Mesopotamia at an early period. Probably they represent settlements of Sumerian and other miners in the rich metalliferous areas in which they are found.

Of late years evidence has been forthcoming of the actual existence of Sumerian colonies in the north. Asshur, which was to become a centre of Assyrian power, was founded by Sumerians. Before the Semitic Assyrians became the predominant people in this region, a Hittite or Mitannian people held sway at Asshur. Mitannian names appeared even in Sumeria in the age of Dungi of Ur, and later. Asshur long remained tributary to Sumeria.

A colony of early Assyrians had been established at Kara-Euyuk in Cappadocia on the borders of the Hittite country, and there Sumerian and Amoritic religious ideas met and mingled. Copper, lead, and silver were worked in the Taurus and a busy trade was conducted with Sumeria. Professor Sayce informs us that tablets from Kara-Euyuk refer to tin, which was “a rare and precious metal in Babylonia at the time (2500–2200 B.C.)”. Whence was the tin obtained? Sayce refers in this connection to the stele of a Sargon, a patesi of Asshur about 2180, which mentions “Ku-Ki (Tin land) beyond the sea”. Another reference is to “the Tin land and Kaptara (? Crete), the countries beyond the Upper Sea (Mediterranean)”.² Professor Sayce would have it that tin from Western Europe was carried to the Syrian coast as far back as 2800 B.C. It is of interest in this

¹ *Jadé*, Chicago, 1912, p. 5.

² Article in *Ancient Egypt*, 1921, Part IV, pp. 102–3.

connexion to note that tradition took the Phœnicians from the Persian Gulf to Tyre and Sidon.

The voyages from the Syrian coast to Spain depended for their success, according to Sayce, on the winds, and were undertaken chiefly in the summer season. But the traders who went westward could not be certain of completing a voyage in a single summer. A place for wintering boats was required and a suitable island for this purpose was Malta. Sayce would attribute to the Syrian seafarers the megalithic and other remains on Malta and on the adjoining island of Gozo. He holds that jadite amulets and certain cups and pottery found in Malta are similar to those of Kara-Euyuk. The jadite axe amulets of Malta certainly suggest an early connexion with Western Asia. Although no metals have been found on the island, it must be borne in mind that it was the ores that the mariners carried to industrial centres. Implements of bronze were not required by seafarers; their relations with the inhabitants of the thinly-peopled countries whose mineral riches they exploited, appear to have been of a peaceful character. After all, what occasion was there for warfare?

The introduction of Sumerian civilization into Eastern Asia Minor at an early period appears to have stimulated the growth of culture among the Hittites and other peoples who inhabited the country. Thousands of tablets which have been found at Bogház Keui, the centre of Hittite power, reveal among other things that at least eight languages were spoken. Professor Sayce states that one of the languages in question cannot be distinguished from Sanskrit, and he favours the view that the Aryans who ultimately invaded India were originally in Asia Minor. He considers further that the Etruscans migrated to Italy from Lydia. Tradition refers to the "white Syrians" of Cappadocia, and Professor Sayce favours the view that they were Nordics who had

come south, and, settling in Asia Minor, afterwards pressed into Syria and distributed themselves along the North African coast. In this way he accounts for the fair Amorites and the fair Libyan and Berber peoples.

But the people who were to dominate Western Asia were the Semites. The first Semitic invasion of Southern Mesopotamia was the Akkadian. These Semites adopted Sumerian modes of life and thought; ultimately their language became that of commerce and government, but Sumerian remained, after the Sumerian political power had been displaced, as the language of culture and religion. Fresh incursions of Amoritic Syrians from the west occurred both in Lower and Upper Mesopotamia, and in the latter the city of Babylon became a centre of Semitic power. In time there arose the Dynasty of which the most brilliant ruler was the famous Hammurabi who came to the throne about 2123 B.C. The first Dynasty of Babylonia had been established about 2225 B.C., when Assyria to the north was yet in its infancy.

CHAPTER XIV

The Hammurabi and Kassite Ages

Hammurabi as Civil Ruler—Rise of Babylon—Wars with Elam—Cappadocian Colony—Hammurabi's Army at Asshur—Kassite Harvesters—Chaldaean Dynasty—Amurru in Revolt—Decline of Babylonian Military Power—Rise of the Hittites—Abraham and the Sons of Heth—Hittites in Syria and Palestine—Hittites raid Babylon—Mitanni's Indo-European Aristocracy—Hittites and Kassites—Kassites in Babylonia—Their Feudal System—Private Ownership of Land and Property—Egyptian Influence in Kassite Age—Crete and Babylonia—China and India—Babylonia as Karduniash.

Hammurabi's name has been associated chiefly with his famous Code of Laws to which students of history have paid high tributes. His debt to his predecessors in this connexion is now being fully recognized. It would appear that he had the earlier Sumerian laws revised and codified, the penalties being made more severe. He also strengthened the civil courts which were gradually displacing the older ecclesiastical courts presided over by the priests. Even the kingship was secularized. Hammurabi was not regarded and worshipped as a god as had been the late Sumerian rulers. He was recognized instead as the chosen of the gods. He was essentially a civil ruler and administrator, the Royal High Judge rather than the Royal High Priest. The supreme Court of Appeal was composed of the "King's judges"; in the lower courts in the various cities, ordinary cases were disposed of.

The rise of Babylon to first place among the cities of Southern Mesopotamia had primarily a dynastic significance.

It was certainly better situated for centralized government than Ur in the south, commanding, as it did, the trade routes branching into Syria on the one hand and Persia on the other. But its rise to prosperity was in no small measure due to the genius and far-seeing mind of Hammurabi, who was a great statesman and a great soldier. Under his rule Babylon became the London of Western Asia.

Hammurabi succeeded his father as king about 2123 B.C., and reigned for forty-three years. Beginning as little more than the ruler of a city state he became ultimately a mighty Emperor. His chief rival at the outset was Rim Sin, who followed his brother Warad Sin as King of Larsa. Both these monarchs were sons of Kudur-mabuk, who ruled in Elam. Apparently Sumer had been overrun by Elamites prior to the rise of Hammurabi. Larsa and Ur, and the areas controlled by these cities, had come under Elamite sway. Even Babylon had to regard the Elamite rulers with more than mere respect. Sin-muballit, father of Hammurabi, had been unable to arrest the victorious progress of Rim Sin, who aspired to dominate the whole of Sumer and Akkad.

Having strengthened the fortifications of Babylon, Hammurabi waged war against Rim Sin. Sumer was too small for such rivals. Hammurabi's first notable success was achieved about 2117 B.C., six years after he came to the throne, when he captured Erech and Isin. It was not, however, until 2094 B.C., when he was in the thirtieth year of his reign, that he defeated a strong Elamite army and took Rim Sin prisoner. The fall of the pro-Elamite power centred at Larsa was then complete and the image of the goddess of that city was carried to Babylon. Ur and other cities were occupied by Hammurabi; he was lauded in hymns as "the mighty conqueror" who had "cleared the lands of the enemy, bringing war to an end, terminating

rebellion, and destroying invaders like dolls of clay ”.

Three years later Hammurabi constructed a great canal which brought fresh prosperity to Sumer and Akkad. A contemporary record tells that he “ gathered together the scattered people ”, gave them “ pastures and water in abundance ”, and “ had them settled in dwellings of peace ”.

In the west and north, as well as in the south, Hummurabi consolidated the power of Babylon, the capital. The Cappadocian colony recognized him as their king. An inscription refers to him as “ King of Amurru ” (the Western Land). He kept a standing army in Asshur, as overlord of Assyria, and it was used to attack the raiders from northern Persia and Armenia.

Eight years after the death of Hammurabi the forces he had kept in check had gathered strength and become dangerously aggressive. Kassite mountaineers from the east of the Tigris had for years been employed as harvesters in Sumer and Akkad. Apparently they carried home with them tales which tempted their kinsmen. In 2072 B.C., a force of fighting Kassites raided and plundered the rich and fertile valley. For three or four years there were unsettled conditions in consequence of this raid. A second Rim Sin established himself as King of Larsa, but his career was a brief one. He was either killed in battle or executed as a rebel. But the flames of revolt spread to the Sea-land (Kaldu = Chaldæa). It would appear that the old Sumerian element was influential in the south, and that, indeed, the earliest Chaldæans were mainly of Sumerian stock. It was from the Sea-land that Samsu-iluna's most formidable opponent, Ilu-ma-ilu drew his strength. It may be, as has been suggested, that he operated in conjunction with the Kassite raiders. He pushed northward, and Hammurabi's son found it necessary to reconstruct old fortresses in the vicinity of his capital.

Abēshu', grandson of Hammurabi, succeeded his father, and fought against the Sea-landers. He was unable, however, to overthrow the new Dynasty. The kingdom of the Sea-land gathered strength and included a considerable area of Ancient Sumer. The revolt had spread to Amurru before Abēshu' came to the throne. None of the later kings of the Dynasty possessed the power or genius of Hammurabi. Little is known regarding them except that they were greatly devoted to the gods and gave rich gifts to the temples. The fact that they were able to enrich the priesthood indicates, however, that Babylon was rich and prosperous. New canals and towns were constructed, but the military power of Babylon had suffered decline.

A powerful people were coming into prominence in the north. These were the Hittites, the "sons of Heth" of the Old Testament, known to the Ancient Egyptians as the Kheta, to the Assyrians as the Khatti, and in Babylon as the Hatti. Their capital in Asia Minor was situated at Bogház-Keui ("the village in the pass"). Abraham knew them as landowners and traders in the land of Canaan and purchased from Ephron the Hittite "the cave of Machpelah", and a field in which to bury his dead:

"And Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant."

If Abraham was a contemporary of Hammurabi, the Hittites would appear to have penetrated Canaan as colonists a century and a half before they took arms against Babylon. In 1926 B.C., the Hammurabi Dynasty was brought to an end by a Hittite raid from Bogház-Keui. Apparently the Hittites were establishing themselves in Syria and Palestine. It is not known how long they remained in Babylon. They plundered the city and carried off the image of the god

Marduk (Merodach). At a later period the statue was returned from Khani, apparently the land of the Mitanni, in which an aristocracy of Indo-European speech was subsequently established.

An obscure period ensues. The Sea-land Dynasty continued and several city kings held sway. Babylon ceased to be politically influential although it, no doubt, continued to be an important commercial centre. The Hittites dominated the Euphrates trade route, and apparently were allies of the Mitanni, if not actually related to them. They appear also to have been allies of the Kassites, who gradually became influential in Babylonia.

In 1746 B.C., Gande or Gandash, the Kassite chief, conquered Babylon, and declared himself king of that city and of Sumer and Akkad. The Sea-land Dynasty, however, continued to exist for about forty years longer. The Kassites formed a military aristocracy in Babylonia and for some six centuries kept the peace. It may be that they were welcomed by the Sumerians and preferred by them to their former rulers, the Semites. One of the outstanding features of the Kassite regime was a change in the system of land tenure. The tribal or national boundary stones referred to in Sumerian times indicate that lands were owned by the State and by priesthoods and rented to individuals, or worked by crown and temple employees. Kassite kings granted estates to individuals and they were inherited by their heirs. A feudal system similar to that which obtained in Egypt during the Middle Kingdom period had evidently come into favour. No doubt the landowners were bound to render services to the State. It may be that the strength of the Kassite government was in no small measure due to the establishment of the system of private ownership of land. At any rate, the aristocrats were essentially landed proprietors and they owed their authority to royal favour.

In the cities there were groups of wealthy traders some of whose business records have come to light. These strike a note of modernity. House property was privately owned and sold or let as in our own day. Numerous letting contracts have been discovered. Farms and gardens were likewise let under specified terms, the rents to be paid on certain dates, tenants to be responsible for repairs and upkeep and so on. The courts imposed fines in cases of breaches of contract. Taxes were fixed and collected by government officials.

A prominent figure in the business world was the money-lender; he was the banker of Ancient Babylonia. The names of some of the financial firms have come down to us. Certain firms appear to have existed for several generations. They not only lent their own money but acted as agents for individual lenders. The lenders, however, took all risks as do mortgage holders in our own time. Heavy rates of interest were paid, and the business of moneylending was consequently a profitable one.

The Kassite invasion did not change the business habits of the people of Babylonia. It brought in a new ruling caste, and the settled conditions which ensued were favourable for the development of commerce and industry. Private rights were protected and the land was secured from revolt and invasion. The Kassites adopted the language and script of the Semites and favoured the promotion of education in connexion with the temples, to which schools were attached. Traces of Egyptian influence, such as the introduction of the winged disc and the sphinx, indicate a cultural connexion with the Nile Valley as in early Sumerian times. We, however, know too little regarding the Kassite period, prolonged as it was, to do much more than refer to this phase of the problem. There appears to have been a good deal of intercourse between the civili-

zations of Mesopotamia and Egypt. Both met and mingled in Syria, and the Phœnicians appear to have been carriers of the elements of the combined cultures into Europe. The Cretans were influenced mainly by Egypt, but Mesopotamian culture contact by way of the Syrian coast appears to have left its impress on the island civilization. To the east and north of Mesopotamia the prospectors and traders carried the seeds of culture which germinated and ultimately flourished in areas as far distant as the Shensi province of China and northern India. The peoples of Iran and the Transcaspian region influenced others, as they themselves had been influenced, by the civilization which had grown up in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates.

During the Kassite period Babylonia was known as Karduniash.

CHAPTER XV

The Amarna-Kassite Age

Kassites and Hyksos—Horse revolutionizes Warfare—Mystery of the "Horse Tamers"—Mitanni as Leading Power—Ethnics of Hittites—The Amorites—Vedic Gods in Western Asia—The Aryans—Mitanni as Egypt's Ally—Babylonian Language in Diplomacy and Trade—Tell-el-Amarna Letters—Mitanni's War with Hittites—Demands for Egypt's Gold—Religious Value of Precious Metals and Precious Stones—The Pharaoh as Gold-giver and Life-giver—Hittites and Assyrians—Hittite Empire-builder—Rameses II in Hittite War—Hittite Treaty with Egypt—Passing of the Hittites.

The Kassite conquest of Babylonia, like the Hyksos invasion of Egypt, was connected with widespread migrations regarding which, in the absence of records, comparatively little is known. It would appear, however, that they were indirectly due to the earlier conquests achieved by the warrior kings of Mesopotamia and the Nile valley, and to the cultural influences which, in consequence of these conquests, emanated from these centres of ancient civilization. The weapons of war had been invented by the conquerors who subdued and exploited the conquered. In time the vassals acquired from their rulers the requisite knowledge of the crafts, of the science of warfare and methods of government, which qualified them not only to imitate but to rival their teachers. Both the Kassites and the Hyksos appear to have possessed improved weapons of war. To these their success was, no doubt, in some measure due. But of even more importance was the fact that they made use of the horse and chariot. The war chariot revolutionized

warfare during the period under consideration. Like the "tanks" in modern times they shattered superior forces, while they enabled generals to carry out rapid movements and follow up successes.

The domesticated horse was introduced into Babylonia from the east and apparently by the Kassites. It first appeared in Egypt during the Hyksos period. We do not know with certainty in which area the "horse tamers" were located. Some favour the Iranian plateau and others Asia Minor. The view has been urged that the earliest "horse tamers" were a people of Indo-European speech and that the spread of Indo-European languages was connected with the use of the horse. The Hyksos conquerors of Egypt were, however, in the main a Semitic people, and it has yet to be proved that the Kassites were either racially or linguistically connected with the groups of ancient peoples vaguely classed as "Indo-Europeans" or "Aryans".

When the veil of history is lifted in Western Asia in connexion with the Syrian campaigns of Thothmes III of Egypt, it is found that that great conqueror was opposed by allies of different nationalities and racial stocks. The leading power was Mitanni.

The ethnics of the Hittites remain obscure. They were non-Semitic, but they co-operated with Semites. The Amorites fought for, or were in league with, the Hittites against the armies of Mitanni and Egypt. In Babylonia the Sumerians and Kassites, who represented different races and spoke different languages, were anti-Semitic, both having had bitter experience of the Semitic "mailed fist". It may be, however, that the Kassites who conquered Babylonia and the Hyksos who conquered Egypt were directed by military "horse tamers" of Indo-European speech. The state of Mitanni in Northern Mesopotamia came into

existence during the period of these conquests. Its military aristocracy had Indo-European names, closely resembling those of the heroes of the Hindu-Sanskrit epics. One of the kings of Mitanni, for instance, was Dushratta. This name closely resembles that of king Dasaratha of the Hindu epic *Ramáyana*. During the Akhenaton period the gods Indra, Varuna, Mithra, and the Nasatya twins (the Aswins) were worshipped in the Mitanni area, as they were at a later period in India. The Kassites had as one of their gods, apparently their chief god, "Shuriyash", who appears to have been the same as the Hindu "Surya". Apparently a branch of the peoples referred to as "Aryans" had exercised a cultural influence on the borders of Asia Minor long before India was invaded. Whether or not they were of Anatolian or of Iranian origin is not yet clear. It has to be borne in mind in this connexion that neither language nor religion affords clear indications of racial affinities. But no doubt can remain that the influence of some unlocated culture area is to be traced in Northern Mesopotamia before and during the Akhenaton period, as at a later age in the Punjab, in which Sanskrit-speaking peoples effected settlements.

After the Hyksos were driven out of Egypt and Thothmes III extended and consolidated the Egyptian Empire in Palestine and Syria, the Aryan rulers of Mitanni became the allies of the Pharaohs. The princes of the one land were married to the princesses of the other; the famous "heretic king", Akhenaton, had Mitanni blood in his veins. But although Egypt became politically predominant in Palestine and Syria, the cultural influence of Babylonia continued to operate. Its language was the language of commerce and diplomacy, and was used by the Mitanni, the Hittites, and the Egyptians when corresponding with one another.

The "Tell-el-Amarna Letters", as the stamped clay tablets discovered at Tell-el-Amarna, the city of Pharaoh Akhenaton, are designated, have thrown a flood of light on a period which had previously been exceedingly obscure, especially so far as Babylonia was concerned. The tablets had been deposited in "the place of the records of the palace of the king". They included letters from Western Asia and duplicates of letters dispatched from Egypt. Some belong to the reign of Amenhotep III and others to the reign of that monarch's son Akhenaton.

The Kassite kings of Babylonia (called Karduniash) addressed the Pharaohs of Egypt with respect and courtesy. A characteristic letter opens:¹

"To Nimmuria (throne name of Amenhotep III as vocalized by scribe), my brother: Kallima-Sin, King of Karduniash (Babylonia), your brother.

"May it be well with you, with your house, your wives, your iand, your chariots, your horses, your chief men, may it be very well.

"As to the maiden, my daughter, to marry whom you have written me, she is grown up, and marriageable; send and let her be brought."

But although a princess of Babylonia might be sent to the royal harem of Egypt, the princesses of Egypt were not sent to Babylonia. The letter makes this clear:

"Now, my brother, when I wrote to you, to marry your daughter, you said that you would not give her, in these words: 'From of old, a daughter of the King of Egypt has not been given to anyone.' Why is that? A king are you, and you can do according to your heart's wish."

Kallima-Sin was evidently anxious to be friendly with the

¹ Quotations from *The Tell-el-Amarna Letters*, Hugo Winckler (London, Berlin, and New York, 1896).

great and powerful Pharaoh of Egypt, and to show proof of that friendship to his people and neighbouring rulers. He was willing to accept any lady the Pharaoh would send, and was prepared to declare to his people that she was of royal blood. The letter continues:

“ If there is any beautiful woman there, send her. Who shall say, ‘ She is not a king’s daughter ’? If, however, you do not send anyone at all, then you will have no regard for brotherhood and friendship.”

Burnaburiash of Babylonia wrote to Akhenaton expressing his desire for peace and friendship:

“ Just as formerly you and my father were on friendly terms with one another, so let now between you and me, mutually, nothing unfriendly or alienating take place. Write me what you want from my land, it shall be brought you; and what I want from your land, I will write you, let it be brought to me.”

The same letter tells that the Canaanites desired during his father’s reign to attack the Egyptians in Western Asia, but the Kassite king replied to the Canaanite chief:

“ Cease (trying) to ally yourself with me. If you cherish hostility against the King of Egypt, my brother, and ally yourself with another, take care lest I come and plunder you, for he is in alliance with me.”

The Kassite king was jealous of Egypt’s recognition of the rising power of Assyria. Burnaburiash claimed to be overlord of the Assyrians and wrote to Akhenaton:

“ Now, the Assyrians, my subjects, have I not written you in regard to them? Why have they (nevertheless) come into your land? If you love me, they should not carry on any business; let them accomplish nothing at all.”

There is quite a human touch in the letter which begins:

"Since your ambassador came, I have been sick so that I could not invite him to dinner."

Egypt's overlordship of Canaan was recognized by the Kassite king. Burnaburiash complained to Akhenaton that his merchants had been robbed in Henaton in Canaan and wrote:

"Kinahhi (Canaan) is your land and you are the King. I have been violently dealt with in your land, subdue them. Make good the money they have stolen, and the people who killed my servants, kill them, and avenge their blood."

The Assyrian king Ashur-uballit, in a letter, likewise refers to robbers of caravans, called the Suti.

Dushratta, King of Mitanni, wrote to Amenhotep III of Egypt, telling that the Hittites had invaded his land "wholly as an enemy", but he had destroyed them.

"Verily," says he, "a chariot and two horses, a boy and a girl, of the booty of the land of Hatti, I have sent you."

Dushratta addressed Amenhotep III as "my brother, my son-in-law, who loves me and whom I love", and continued:

"In the time of your fathers, they were (even then) with my fathers on very friendly terms, but you have increased (this friendship) still more, and with my father, you have been on very friendly terms indeed. . . . May my brother, more than to my father, magnify his love to me."

The various kings who cultivated the friendship of Egypt had one desire in common. They wanted gold. Dushratta of Mitanni asks in one letter for "a great deal of gold", adding, "More than to my father may my brother give to me". A letter from Ashur-uballit of Assyria to Akhenaton states:

"In your land gold is (as common as) dust."

Dushratta also wrote:

“ In Egypt gold is more abundant than dust.”

Burnaburiash, in one of his letters, was quite peevish when reminding Amenhotep III of a previous request for gold. He wants it to complete the work he has undertaken, and adds:

“ When I have completed the work which I have undertaken, to what purpose should I then desire gold? If you should send me then 3000 talents of gold, I would not receive it, but would send it back, and I would not give you my daughter to wife.”

Burnaburiash complained later that a consignment of “ twenty minas of gold ” sent to him was under weight. “ When,” he says, “ it was put in the furnace, it did not amount to five minas.” The same king, writing to Akhenaton, complains that the gold was under value. He hints that the Egyptian officials have been dishonest.

Dushratta notes with enthusiasm in a letter to Amenhotep III that the gold sent to him was of the specified weight. “ I rejoiced greatly over it,” he says. In another letter, however, he complains that the tablet of gold he received was “ alloyed with copper ”.

Egypt was during the period under review the chief source of gold in the ancient world. Large quantities of the precious metal were obtained in Nubia, which takes its name from *nub*, the Egyptian word for gold. But it was not merely because gold was precious that it was so greatly desired by the royal friends of the Pharaoh. It had a magico-religious value. In Egypt it was “ the flesh of the gods ” and was supposed to promote longevity, like lapis-lazuli and other semi-precious stones. Dushratta of Mitanni, in one of his letters to Amenhotep III, states: “ a maninu of lapis-lazuli and gold as a present for my brother I have sent, and for

100,000 years may it be deposited among my brother's treasures". Amenhotep III was a victim of chronic toothache and neuralgia, and Dushratta sent an image of the goddess Ishtar to the Pharaoh with the prayer: "May Ishtar, queen of heaven, protect my brother and me for 100,000 years" so that both may "live to see good". Dushratta expresses the wish: "May my brother be well for ever".

Precious metals and precious stones were apparently hoarded so as to increase the possessor's store of "religious merit". Good health, long life, good luck were supposed to be derived from treasure. Burnaburiash of Babylonia appears to have regarded treasure in this aspect and wrote to Akhenaton:

"If gold is given to Kings, then brotherhood, goodness and peace rule, and there are friendly relations, and there rules a wealth of precious stones and silver and gold."

He sends presents of lapis-lazuli to the Pharaoh, and asks not for gold only but for some object of religious value made of wood "inlaid with ivory and coloured". Kallima-Sin of Babylon sent to Amenhotep III at least six thrones made of "ušû wood and gold", as well as other articles of furniture in which the gold was evidently used in a magico-religious way. A mina of enamel was sent from Babylon to Akhenaton.

It would appear that the exchange of precious metals, precious stones, &c., which sweetened diplomatic relations, had a religious significance. On the welfare of the kings depended the welfare of their countries. Their welfare was ensured by the accumulation of sacred things. From the king's treasure "flowed" religious "merit". The fact that Egypt possessed so much "life-giving" gold was evidently of great importance in the ancient world. It increased the

prestige of the Pharaoh. He was the "gold giver" and therefore, in a sense, the "life giver" of his time. But the gods of Mesopotamia might, when their images were adorned with life-giving gold and precious stones, be appreciated and revered even in Egypt. The image of Ishtar was sent to Egypt to effect a cure which had baffled the native deities. It was evidently because the religious value of gold was increased when it was used in connexion with the gods, the thrones of kings, &c., that the King of Babylonia sent articles adorned with gold to Egypt. The gold asked for by the kings of Babylonia from the Pharaoh of Egypt was required, as Kallima-Sin informed Amenhotep III, to "complete the work I have undertaken . . . during the harvest". He declares that the precious metal would be useless if sent later. The "work", no doubt of religious significance, had to be completed within a specified period.

The process of "culture-mixing", which had been active for long centuries, can be traced in these Tell-el-Amarna letters. In the Mitanni and Hittite areas the gods of Mesopotamia and Egypt, as well as those of Anatolia and Iran, met and mingled. But of more importance than the gods, whose names were derived from various languages, were the beliefs connected with those mediums through which they were supposed to influence the life of man—the precious metals, precious stones, the herbs, the talismans, the symbols, &c., which kings exchanged as tokens of goodwill and friendship.

During the period covered by the letters two great Powers had begun to loom on the horizon. These were the Hittites of Anatolia and the Assyrians of Northern Mesopotamia. Mitanni was a buffer state between the Egyptian Empire and Asia, and these growing Powers. Although the Kassite king of Babylonia (Karduniash) claimed to be overlord of Assyria, Egypt ignored that shadowy pretension, and kept

in diplomatic touch with "the land so remote", as one of the letters puts it, and beyond its own "land of vassalage" (Syria and Canaan). Ashur-uballit of Assyria had thrown off the Mitannian yoke and ignored the Kassite claim.

The Hittites had become very powerful under their King Shubbiluliuma. He arranged alliances with the Amorites, and stirred them to revolt against Egypt. Mitanni had been weakened by internal troubles and was ultimately "destroyed", its territory being divided between the Hittites and Assyrians. The Hittite king placed on the throne as his vassal Mattiuaza, son of Dushratta, and his own son-in-law. He added the states of North Syria to his empire. Carchemish became a Hittite dependency.

Thousands of cuneiform clay tablets found at Bogház-Keui throw light on the post-Amarna period. These show that the directing brain of the Hittite confederacy was Shubbiluliuma, the son of the king of a small state, who became a powerful emperor. He had a long reign during the fourteenth century B.C., and was a contemporary of Pharaoh Akhenaton and his father, Amenhotep III, of Burnaburiash of Babylonia, and of Ashur-uballit of Assyria, and of Dushratta of Mitanni and his son Mattiuaza, to whom he gave his daughter in marriage. He corresponded with Akhenaton. Arandas, his son, was the conqueror of Mitanni, and his grandson Mursil came into conflict with Egypt during its XIXth Dynasty when Pharaoh Seti I reconquered Southern Syria. Mutallu, son of Mursil, carried on the war. He it was who fought the famous battle with Pharaoh Rameses II at Kadesh on the Orontes with the assistance of his allies the Syrians, Phœnicians, and others.¹

Mutallu was succeeded by his brother Hattusil, who displayed a genius similar to that of his grandfather, the great Shubbiluliuma. He arranged a treaty with Egypt,

¹ See Chapter V.

maintained friendly relations with Babylonia, and kept in being the state of Mitanni, while he also arranged an understanding with the Amorites. Egypt was compelled to allow the Hittites to retain the northern part of its former empire in Western Asia between the Euphrates and the Syrian coast.

Hattusil was the last of the great Hittite emperors. His son Dudhabia and grandson Arnunta do not appear to have distinguished themselves either as statesmen or soldiers. Bogház-Keui began to decline. Its records do not carry us past 1200 B.C.

A new power was in the ascendant. This was Assyria. It is believed that the treaty between Rameses II of Egypt and Hattusil was arranged because both the Pharaoh and the Hittite Emperor had reason to fear the Assyrian "wolf" which was destined to form a new empire more powerful and aggressive than any the world had ever seen.

CHAPTER XVI

Rise of Assyria

Mitanni Overlords of Assyria—Babylonian Claim to Overlordship—Assyria intervenes in Babylonia—Assyrian Conquest of Mitanni—Babylonia subdued—End of Kassite Dynasty—Second Dynasty of Isin—The First Nebuchadnezzar—Hittite Raid—Assyria the leading State—Hittite Confederacy broken up—Middle Empire of Assyria—Assyrian Conquest of Syria and Babylonia—The Age of Semiramis—State of Urartu—Medes, Cimmerians, and Scythians—Cult of Zoroaster—Chaldæan Rulers of Babylonia.

Assyria is a name derived from Asshur, the city state; the Assyrians called themselves the Asshurai. Originally Asshur was a Sumerian colony, but it is not certain whether its name dates from the early period. It came under the sway of the Semites and for a time was embraced in the state of Mitanni, or was merely subject to that power. Among its early rulers were Ushpia, Kikia, and Adasi, whose names are neither Sumerian nor Semitic. Ultimately this city state of Arbela, Nineveh, Kalah, &c., was completely dominated by Semites.

The country of Assyria, to the north of Babylonia, extended from the Upper Zab to Armenia, and, roughly, was bounded on the west by the Tigris. Its wooded hills and fertile valleys presented a sharp contrast to the flat irrigated alluvial plain occupied by the Sumerians and Akkadians. Stone was plentiful, and copper, lead, and iron were to be found in the mountains to the east.

During the early Kassite period Assyria enjoyed a measure

of independence. But after Thothmes III of Egypt had established the Egyptian empire as far north as the borders of Asia Minor, Mitanni conquered it. It had, however, shaken off the yoke of Mitanni before the period covered by the Tell-el-Amarna letters. Burnaburiash, the Kassite king, however, claimed to be overlord of Assyria, and was displeased with the Pharaoh for having corresponded direct with its king, thus recognizing him as an independent ruler.

Ashur-uballit, the Assyrian ruler with whom Akhenaton corresponded, carried out works at Asshur and Nineveh, which suggests that he had cleared these cities of invaders; one of his successors states that he extended his frontier. His daughter married Burnaburiash, the Kassite king. A revolt took place in Babylon, but Ashur-uballit intervened and placed his grandson, Kurigalzu, on the throne. Bel-nirari, son of Ashur-uballit, appears to have been on good terms with his nephew for a time, but ultimately fought against and defeated him.

Bel-nirari's grandson was the first Shalmaneser (*c.* 1300 B.C.) who undertook the work of expanding Assyria towards the west. He invaded Mitanni, and although its king, Sattuara, had the support of Hittites and Aramæans, Shalmaneser was victorious and plundered and despoiled the country almost to the gates of Carchemish on the Euphrates. The Egyptians and the Hittites then realized that a powerful rival had arisen. Mitanni ceased to exist, and Carchemish became the centre of Hittite defence and administration.

Shalmaneser's son, Tukulti-Ninib I (*c.* 1275 B.C.) wrested tribute from the old Mitanni and other lands conquered by his father, and waged war against Babylon. He defeated the Kassites, took their king Kashtiliash prisoner, and had him carried in chains to Asshur. The statue of Marduk, god of Babylon, was also transferred to the Assyrian capital.

Having subdued Babylonia (Karduniash) as far south as

Sea-land, Tukulti-Ninib ruled it for seven years. Then revolts broke out in Babylonia and Assyria. The former regained its independence under a new king. Tukulti-Ninib was besieged and slain by his own nobles in a new city stronghold which he had had erected.

The Kassites had placed on the Babylonian throne Adad-shum-utsur, who reigned for about thirty years. Early in his reign he received back the statue of Marduk. An Assyrian king took refuge in his court and the Kassite king protected him and repelled the advances made by his rival. War broke out and the Assyrian king was slain in a battle which was fought in the vicinity of Asshur. Profiting by the weakness of Assyria, Babylonia appears to have extended its sphere of influence into Northern Mesopotamia.

But the Kassite Dynasty was doomed. Assyria recovered its strength under vigorous royal generals. Ashur-dan I invaded Babylonia, capturing several cities and carrying off great booty. Then Elam waged war and delivered the death blow which shattered the Kassite power. The Kassite Dynasty came to an end in 1181 B.C., having endured for nearly 577 years, and was succeeded by the IInd Dynasty of Isin, which was represented by one really strong ruler, Nebuchadnezzar I.

For a time the tide of war turned in favour of Babylonia. Nebuchadnezzar, the third king of the Dynasty, achieved successes against the Elamites and the Kassites, conquered the land of the Amorites and reached the Mediterranean. A Hittite raid occurred in his third year. Babylon was captured, but Nebuchadnezzar drove out the intruders a fortnight later and followed up his success. He was strong enough to attack Assyria, but the siege of Zanzî was raised by its vigorous monarch Ashur-resh-ishi I. Nebuchadnezzar's second attempt resulted in defeat, and his general was taken prisoner.

The future was with Assyria. Ashur-resh-ishi I was succeeded by his famous son, Tiglath-Pileser I, who made Assyria the most powerful state of his time. He broke up the Hittite confederacy in the first year of his reign. In connexion with this campaign we find mention for the first time of the Mushki who in Greek times were known as the Moschi. They appear to have overcome the Hittites in North Syria, but after being checked by Tiglath-Pileser retired into Cappadocia. They had an army of 20,000 men and 6000 were taken prisoners.

Tiglath-Pileser I was a great builder, and revived the splendour of Asshur, but his successors were less vigorous men, and the empire he had established crumbled as the central power weakened. It was only when an Assyrian king was a great general that Assyria itself, essentially a predatory state, could be powerful and influential.

Babylonia, with its rich natural resources, recovered somewhat after the death of Tiglath-Pileser I, and cultivated friendly relations with Assyria. Plundering nomads of the Suti tribes could not, however, be held in check, and raided Northern Babylonia, carrying off on one occasion tremendous spoils. A short-lived Sea-land Dynasty held sway in Babylonia and repaired some of the ravages accomplished by the Suti. Other weak Dynasties followed.

In the ninth century Assyria once again became powerful. Its Second or Middle Empire was built up by the vigorous warrior kings Ashur-natsir-pal III, Shalmaneser III, Shamshi-Adad VII, and Adad-nirari IV.

The earlier Assyrian conquerors contented themselves with conquests and spoils and annual tribute, and did not make provision for holding permanently the areas they had subdued. A new policy was introduced during the Second Empire. Assyrian fortresses were established to dominate conquered states or, at any rate, to facilitate future raids.



10 635

Photo, Mansell

ASHUR-NATSIR-PAL RECEIVING THE SUBMISSION OF THE ENEMY

A marble slab from the N.W. Palace of Nimroud; now in the British Museum

A new Assyrian capital was founded at Kalah by Ashur-natsir-pal III, and the Dynasty he established endured for a couple of centuries. The monarchs were military despots and the great men of the kingdom were war lords.

The new Assyrian Empire extended from Lake Van in the north to Babylonia. Ashur-natsir-pal had weakened the Hittite sway in North Syria. In 877 B.C., he captured the wealthy commercial city of Carchemish on the Euphrates, and passed on to Lebanon and the Mediterranean coastland. Shalmaneser III (858-824 B.C.) also struck at the Hittite confederacy, and at Karkâr near the Orontes won a great victory. North Syria became an Assyrian dependency, and fortresses were garrisoned by Assyrian troops.

A few years after he came to the throne Shalmaneser intervened in Babylonian politics. He espoused the cause of Marduk-nâdin-shum, and entering Babylonia with an army defeated and slew his rival, Marduk-bêl-usâte. He then attacked the Sea-landers, who were forced to agree to pay annual tribute. The Babylonian king acknowledged Shalmaneser as his overlord.

After Shalmaneser had reigned for thirty-one years, a rebellion took place in Assyria. It was led by his son, Ashur-dan-apli, and the kingdom was split in twain. Four years later Shalmaneser died, and his successor, Shamshi-Adad VII (823-811 B.C.) had to fight against his brother for two years. Having proved himself victorious, he set out in the typical Assyrian manner to win back lost territory at the point of the sword. Having had success in the north and east, he turned his attention to Babylonia.

Marduk-balatsu-ikbi of Babylon made a great effort to maintain his independence. He led against the Assyrian king an army of Babylonians, supported by Elamites, Chaldeans, Aramæans, and others, but was defeated with great

slaughter. A period of unrest ensued in Babylonia, during which the Aramæans seized estates by force.

Adad-nirari IV (810-782 B.C.) was the next powerful Assyrian ruler. He achieved successes in the east and the west and took tribute in the latter area from Damascus and Syria. His queen was the Babylonian Princess Sammu-ramat who was remembered in tradition as Semiramis. According to Herodotus (I, 184), she caused certain embankments to be constructed in the plain near Babylon so as to control the river Euphrates, which had been wont to overflow and flood the whole country round about. Apparently she was a lady of great influence, for in official inscriptions she was referred to on equal terms with her husband. Apparently at the time Assyria was being profoundly influenced by Babylonian culture. The inscriptions of Adad-nirari IV do not give details of the burning and flaying of human beings in conquered cities as do those of earlier Assyrian monarchs; they have withal literary qualities which suggest that Babylonian influence had left a deep impress on the new generation. The god Nebo was exalted as a rival of the god Ashur; he appears to have been a counterpart of the Babylonian culture-god Ea, who controlled the water supply. A hymn praises him as the god who fills canals, protects fields, and ripens crops.

Adad-nirari was the last great ruler of Assyria's Middle Empire period. He and his successors had to deal with a powerful new rival which had arisen in the north on the shores of Lake Van. This was the State of Urartu. It had been attacked time and again by the earlier Assyrian warlords, but it not only survived but flourished. A confederacy had been formed and its leaders aimed at establishing their sway over the weakened Hittite states. The Medes and Cimmerians were also appearing on the north-eastern frontier of Assyria, and these and the Scythians were des-

tined to leave their mark in history. About this time, too, the cult of Zoroaster was being established on the Iranian plateau. In Southern Babylonia the Sea-land power persisted. It was reinforced by fresh migrations of Semites from Arabia. Sea-land (Chaldæan) kings had won their way to the throne of Babylon during the Assyrian Middle Empire period, and received support from Elam. But for over a century and a half from the time of Semiramis Assyria was destined to be the great world power, and to excel in splendour all its former achievements.

CHAPTER XVII

Passing of Assyria

Assyria's last Empire—The Lost Ten Tribes—Babylon and her Allies—Isaiah warns King Ahaz—Sargon's Wars—Conquest of Babylonia—The Fierce Sennacherib—Alliance of Babylonians, Jews, and Egyptians—Captives from Judah—Assyrian Disaster at Jerusalem—Esharhaddon's Triumphs—Conquest of Egypt—Ashur-banipal the Great—Sack of Thebes—The Babylonian Sardanapallos—Sack of Susa—A Famous Library—Doom of Assyria—Fall of Nineveh—The Last Stand at Harran—Egypt as Ally of Assyria—Nebuchadrezzar and his Allies—The Neo-Babylonian Empire.

With the rise of Sargon II (722–705 B.C.), Assyria entered upon its most brilliant but final epoch as a world power. The empire ruled over by that great war-lord extended from Lake Van in the north to the Persian Gulf in the south, Elam maintaining its independence. To the north-east it included the east and central areas of Cilicia, Cappadocia, and part of Phrygia. North Syria, Phœnicia, and the whole of Palestine to the borders of Arabia acknowledged the overlordship of Assyria, and Cyprus sent tribute to Nineveh, which was the capital of the great empire.

Early in his reign Sargon captured Samaria and he transported from Samaria and Galilee to the Median Highlands 27,290 men—the lost Ten Tribes. He colonized these areas with Babylonians, including the inhabitants of Cutha and Northern Mesopotamia. The Old Testament record sets forth:

“ The king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away

into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. . . .

“And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel; and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof. . . .”

The Chaldæan king, Merodach-Baladan III, had seized the throne of Babylon and allied himself with Elam and the Aramæans. He reigned for about eleven years, but as an alien tyrant who plundered native land and property owners to reward the Chaldæans and Aramæans who gave him their support. Sargon waged war against him early in his reign, but although he claimed a victory, Merodach-Baladan continued to dominate Babylonia.

The Assyrian Emperor had to deal with Syria, where a league had been formed against him, apparently at the instigation of Egypt. Sargon swept victoriously through Syria and Palestine, and took tribute from North Arabian kings (715 B.C.). Four years later another league gave trouble. The pro-Egyptian party in Jerusalem attempted to involve King Ahaz. Isaiah, however, warned his king, before whom he walked naked and barefoot:

“And the Lord said, Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia; so shall the King of Assyria lead away the Egyptians prisoners. . . .

“And they (the allies) shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory.”

Upper Egypt was at the time ruled by Ethiopians.

Sargon broke up this new league, and then dealt with another in Northern Syria and Anatolia in which Urartu was also involved. In time the northerners were completely

subdued and Urartu became a dependency of the Assyrian Empire. Midas of Phrygia was likewise compelled to acknowledge Sargon as his overlord.

It was then that the Assyrian war-lord found it possible to deal with the Chaldæan usurper in Babylon (709 B.C.). He defeated Merodach-Baladan and his Elamite allies, and was welcomed in Babylonia by the priests and chief citizens, who had him proclaimed as their lawful king (710 B.C.). Merodach-Baladan was subsequently forced to take flight into Elam. The lands and property seized by the Chaldæan were restored by Sargon to the rightful owners, the gods of Ur and Erech were restored to their temples, and the whole land was pacified to the shores of the Persian Gulf.

Sargon built a new capital, called Dur-Sharrukin, "the city of Sargon", to the north of Nineveh, and there he worshipped not only Ashur, the Assyrian chief god, but revived the Babylonian religion. His end is involved in mystery, but apparently he was assassinated by a soldier.

Sennacherib (705-680 B.C.), son of Sargon, was acting as viceroy in the northern part of the empire when he came to the throne. The passing of Sargon, as was to be expected, was followed by disturbances. In Babylonia an effort was made to throw off the Assyrian yoke. The son of a slave was proclaimed king, and reigned for a month. Then Merodach-Baladan returned from exile, and, with the aid of an army of allies, established his power once again. But after a few months had elapsed, Sennacherib defeated him and took thousands of prisoners. Merodach-Baladan fled, and a Babylonian prince, Bel-ibni, was enthroned as a vassal of Sennacherib. Soon afterwards Merodach-Baladan died.

Another rebellion broke out in Babylon, and Sennacherib placed his son Ashur-nādin-shūm on the throne. He had a fleet constructed, and broke the power of the Chaldæans. Then the Elamites invaded Babylonia and carried off Ashur-



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BABYLONIAN JEWELLERY

Dating from the eighth to the fifth centuries B.C. Gold earrings, necklaces of gold and beads of lapis and cornelian recently found at Ur. Reproduced by permission of the British Museum.

nādin-shūm after a reign of six years. The captive ruler died in Elam. Sennacherib was avenged, however, when later the Chaldæan who had been placed on the throne of Babylon by the Elamites was defeated and taken prisoner.

When Merodach-Baladan returned to Babylon he had attempted to form a strong league against Assyria. His ambassadors were welcomed in Tyre, Palestine, and Northern Arabia. Hezekiah became an ally of the Chaldæan.

“At that time Merodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah. . . . And Hezekiah was glad of them” (*Isaiah*, xxxix, 1, 2).

Sennacherib swept victoriously through Syria and Palestine. The King of Tyre fled to Cyprus, but the city held out. Sennacherib, however, ceded much of its territory to the King of Sidon. An army of Egyptian and other allies was routed and a number of cities in Judah were captured. Over 200,000 people were transported to another part of the empire. Jerusalem was not taken, but the investment was so strict and pressing that Hezekiah found it necessary to pay arrears of tribute and a fine, and to give hostages.

At a later period Sennacherib returned to Palestine, fresh trouble having broken out, no doubt as a result of Egyptian intrigues, and again besieged Jerusalem. Sennacherib's army, however, was compelled to retreat, a pestilence, as it would seem, having broken out in the camp. Isaiah had prophesied that the Lord would send “a blast” upon the Assyrian king. The Biblical account sets forth:

“And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh” (2 *Kings*, xix, 35, 36).

Babylonia again gave trouble. Sennacherib had placed on the throne Mushezib-Marduk, a Chaldæan, but he formed an alliance with Elam and revolted. A battle was fought, but although the Assyrians claimed a victory it could not be followed up. In 689 B.C., however, Sennacherib returned. Elam was at the time involved in a struggle with invaders from Parsua (Persia), and the Babylonians obtained no assistance. Babylon was taken, sacked, and desolated. Temples and palaces were thrown down. The private houses even were not spared, and large numbers of the inhabitants were deported. To complete the ruin of the great commercial capital, Sennacherib had the course of the Euphrates deflected so that part of the city and of the adjoining farm lands were turned into swamps. It may be that the Assyrian monarch hoped that Nineveh, which he had strengthened and largely rebuilt, would become the greatest Western Asian city in the future.

When Isaiah foretold that Sennacherib would be stricken and forced to raise the siege of Jerusalem he declared:

“Thus saith the Lord, . . . I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land” (*2 Kings*, xix, 6, 7).

Early in January in 680 B.C. a rebellion broke out in Nineveh, and Sennacherib was murdered. According to Berosus, he was slain by two of his own sons. The Biblical account is as follows:

“Sennacherib . . . dwelt at Nineveh. And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch (? Ashur) his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Armenia: and Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.”

The brothers were apparently opposed to the succession of Esarhaddon, who, however, established his power within a

month of his father's death, and reigned from 680 till 668 B.C.

Esarhaddon's mother was a Babylonian princess named Nakia, who appears to have resembled the famous Semiramis. She appears to have governed the Assyrian Empire during her son's absence on military campaigns. It may be that she had acted in a similar capacity for her husband, Sennacherib.

Herodotus (I, 184-7) refers to Queen Nitocris, who was "a wiser princess" than Semiramis, and credits her with carrying out great public works at Babylon. It may be that it was due to the influence of his mother that Esarhaddon undertook the work of restoring the ruined city to which many of the exiled inhabitants returned. Lands were restored to the former owners, the Chaldæans who had seized them being expelled. War broke out in Chaldæa. Two of Merodach-Baladan's sons gave trouble there, and in the end Esarhaddon agreed to recognize one of them as a vassal king.

In the west Taharka (the Biblical Tirhaka), the last Ethiopian King of Egypt of the XXVth Dynasty, continued to interfere with Assyrian authority in Palestine. About twenty years had elapsed since Sennacherib had visited that country, and before he died a new league was formed to throw off the Assyrian yoke. The Assyrian monarch, as we gather from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah (Chapter XXXVII), sent an ambassador named Rabshakeh to King Hezekiah, who heard that Taharka contemplated waging war against Assyria. A letter of warning was sent to Hezekiah. Manasseh, the boy king who succeeded Hezekiah, appears to have joined the pro-Egyptian league, and when Esarhaddon conducted a successful campaign in the west he was taken prisoner. He was, however, afterwards restored to his throne.

In 674 B.C. Esarhaddon struck at Egypt. He reached the frontier fortresses in the Eastern Delta, but was unable

to go farther. A battle was fought and he was forced to retreat. Tyre revolted, and in 670 B.C. Esarhaddon invested that city with part of his force and then pushed southward towards Egypt. The Bedawin co-operated with him in Sinai and their camel caravans supplied water to the Assyrian soldiers. The frontier fortresses were reduced and Taharka's army was defeated in battle. Esarhaddon kept up a vigorous pursuit and captured the city of Memphis, which was plundered.

The Ethiopian king retreated into Upper Egypt, and the governors of the Delta provinces became the vassals of Assyria. Tyre was in the meantime captured.

On his homeward journey, Esarhaddon erected in the Syro-Cappadocian city of Singirli a statue of victory in which he called himself "King of the Kings of Egypt".

In the following year, however, Taharka returned to Lower Egypt and Esarhaddon found it necessary to return so as to reconquer Egypt. He, however, died on the march (668 B.C.).

Ashur-banipal was proclaimed king by the Queen Mother Nakia and the great nobles, and at once made arrangements to have his father's policy against Egypt vigorously pursued. The Delta was successfully invaded again and Taharka defeated in battle. As on the first occasion, Taharka fled southward. He took refuge in Thebes, but was followed by the Assyrians, who compelled him to abandon the ancient capital. It is uncertain, however, if Thebes was captured.

Before long the Delta Egyptian lords began to plot again with Taharka. The Assyrian governor arrested the ring-leaders and sent them in chains to Nineveh. The chief ring-leader was Necho of Sais. He appears to have won favour in the eyes of Ashur-banipal, who sent him back to Sais and made him an Assyrian vassal, with authority over all Egypt.

Taharka did not trouble him, but after his death in 663 B.C., Tanutamon, his successor, went northward with a strong army and captured Memphis. Necho was slain and his son Psamtek was forced, according to Herodotus, to take refuge in Syria. Tanutamon then proclaimed himself Pharaoh of all Egypt.

Ashur-banipal took steps to stamp out the Ethiopian resistance. In 661 B.C., his army invaded Egypt, recaptured Memphis and, sweeping southward, captured and plundered Thebes. A reference to this stirring event is found in the Book of Nahum, who refers to the city as No (Nu Amon).¹ Immense spoils were carried away to Nineveh. Thebes never recovered its former glory and the Ethiopians remained in Nubia. Psamtek I, son of Necho, was reinstated by the Assyrian emperor vassal king of Egypt. As such he was the founder of the XXVIth Dynasty (663-525 B.C.)—the last of the native Dynasties of Ancient Egypt. He was an able and successful ruler. He curbed the power of the feudal lords and the Theban priesthood, organized an army in which there were Greeks, Syrians, Carians, and Libyans, and once again made Egypt a powerful and united kingdom.

Before Ashur-banipal had completed the conquest of Egypt he had restored to Babylon the statue of the god Marduk. His brother Shamash-shum-ukin reigned as vassal king, and for about fifteen years remained faithful. Then he became the chief mover in a league against Assyria in which he was supported by Elamites, Chaldæans, and Aramæans, while the petty kings of Syria and Palestine were induced to give their aid in an endeavour to achieve freedom from the Assyrian yoke. The plot was discovered and Ashur-banipal lamented over the treachery of his "faithless brother". As he put it in an inscription of later

¹ See Chapter VI.

date, "Outwardly with his lips he spoke friendly things, while inwardly his heart plotted murder."

War broke out in 652 B.C. The Assyrian army swept down "like a wolf on the fold". But although ancient Akkad and Sumer were speedily subdued, the strong city of Babylon held out for three years. In the end, his resistance being finally broken, Shamash-shum-ukin shut himself up in his palace, set fire to it and perished in the flames with all his household. It may be that this sensational happening gave origin to the Greek tradition of the death of Sardanapallos.

Elam was subsequently dealt with. Susa was besieged, captured, and sacked (644 B.C.), and never recovered its power. The Medes and Persians ultimately took possession of Elam. Shamash-shum-ukin's western allies were also dealt with in the characteristic Assyrian manner, and blows were struck at the Medes and Scythians.

The records of Ashur-banipal cease after 640 B.C. By this time Psamtek of Egypt had declared his independence and invaded Palestine. He hoped to recover part of the ancient Egyptian Empire, but his efforts were thwarted by the strong resistance set up by Ashdod, which he besieged but was unable to capture.

Ashur-banipal was a cultured man who loved leisure and peace. The military achievements of his reign were accomplished by his generals. He was a great builder and a patron of literature and art. His great library, in which he took pride, contained thousands of inscribed tablets, including translations of the Babylonian classics. He boasted in inscriptions of his own skill as a tablet-writer and told that none of his royal predecessors had learned to write.

The last eighteen years of his reign are obscure. Apparently Assyria gradually suffered loss of military power and prestige. The process of exhaustion was a gradual one, and

was brought about chiefly by the Medes and Scythians. After Elam fell, the Medes became more powerful, and they appear to have cultivated friendly relations with the anti-Assyrian party in Babylonia.

Ashur-banipal was succeeded by his son Ashur-etil-ilâni, who reigned for four or five years, and he was followed by his brother Sin-shar-ishkun.

Northern Babylonia was ruled by Nabopolasar, who called himself "King of Akkad", while the middle and southern areas were ruled by Assyrian governors.

During the reign of Sin-shar-ishkun Nabopolasar revolted and overran the Aramæan state to the north of Hit on the Euphrates. The Assyrian army which came against him was defeated and retired to Harran, but after being reinforced, came out again against the Babylonians. Nabopolasar, however, fell back upon Babylon and no battle was fought.

Strong forces of Scythians were sweeping down from the north. Herodotus (1, 105) tells that they made themselves "masters of Asia" and contemplated invading Egypt, but Psamtek meeting them in Palestine bought them off with gifts. They "scoured the country and plundered everyone of whatever they could", "spread ruin on every side", and "exacted tribute from several nations".

Had Assyria retained its military strength the Scythian menace would have been of short duration. But it was already involved in a life-and-death struggle with the Medes and Babylonians.

In 615 B.C. Nabopolasar of Babylon laid siege to Asshur, but was driven off by an Assyrian army and retreated hastily. The Babylonians took refuge in the city of Takritaim on the Tigris, and were attacked by the Assyrians for ten days. In the end, however, the Assyrians were driven off.

The Medes in 614 B.C. laid siege to Nineveh, but did not

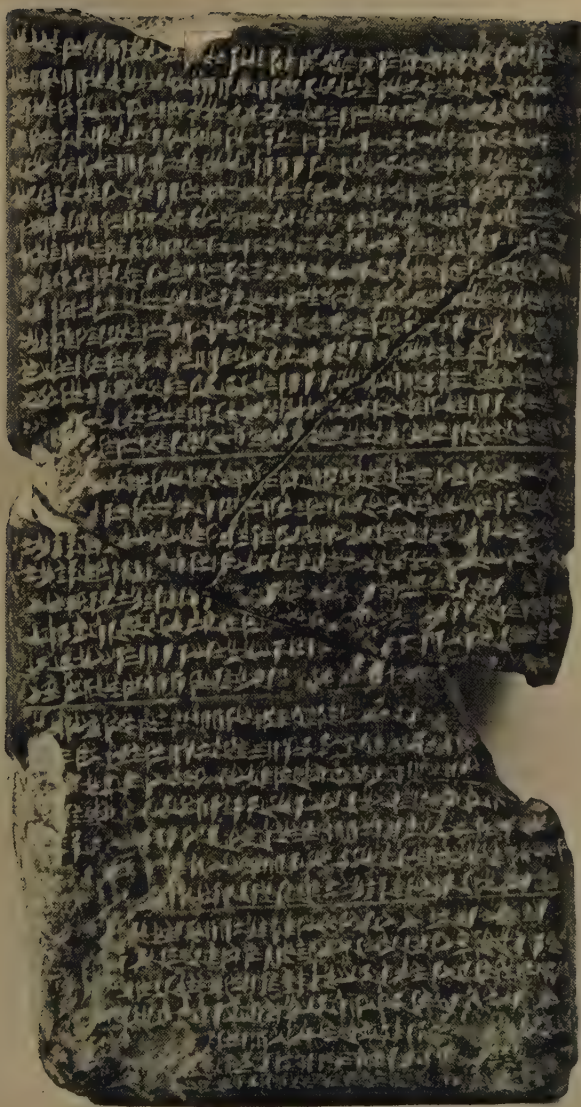
take it. They captured the city of Tabris, a few miles to the north-west of the capital, and plundered it.

Meanwhile Nabopolasar moved northward against Asshur again. Before he arrived, however, the Medes had captured that city, destroyed it, and taken heavy spoil. According to the recently found British Museum Tablet (No. 21,901), which throws a flood of light on a period hitherto so obscure, the Babylonian king, who had marched towards Asshur "to the help of the Mede", arrived after the city was taken. Nabopolasar met in ruined Asshur Kyaxares, King of the Medes, and "friendship and alliance they established together".

In 613 B.C. the Assyrians appear to have been able to operate with some freedom in North-western Mesopotamia, but although they stirred up opposition against Babylon nothing of consequence was achieved. Nothing is recorded regarding the Medes, and it is possible that during this year they were engaged in conflict with the Scythians.

In 612 B.C. the Babylonians, Medes, and Scythians had agreed to take action together against Assyria. The British Museum Tablet is badly damaged at this point, and it is not possible to state where the allies met and joined forces. It is gathered, however, that in the month of Ab (July-August), 612 B.C., the Medes and their allies, the Scythians and Babylonians, conducted "a mighty assault" on the city of Nineveh, captured it, and killed many of the chief men. Sin-shar-ishkun, King of Assyria, is referred to. The few words which told of his end have, however, not survived on the tablet. According to classical tradition, which refers to him as Sardanapallos, he set fire to his palace when he saw the city was to fall, and perished in the flames. The tablet says briefly:

"The spoil of the city; a quantity beyond counting they (the allies) plundered and (turned) the city into a mound and a ruin."



D 635

Photo, Mansell

FALL OF NINEVEH

British Museum Tablet discovered and translated by Mr. C. J. Gadd. This is the Obverse, with thirty-seven lines in small but clear cuneiform. There are thirty-nine lines on the Reverse. It fixes the date of the fall of Nineveh and tells of the latter days of Assyria.

“ There is no healing of thy bruise; thy wound is grievous,” declared the prophet Nahum, addressing Nineveh. “ A mound and a ruin ” it has remained until our own day.

Historians have hitherto assumed that the Assyrian power perished utterly when Nineveh fell, but the Neo-Babylonian Chronicle (British Museum Tablet, No. 21,901) discovered and translated by Mr. C. J. Gadd has added a new last chapter which is not only deeply interesting in itself, but throws fresh light on the history of Ancient Egypt. It shows that a portion of the garrison of Nineveh effected escape from the doomed city, apparently under the leadership of a prince named Ashur-uballit, who became the last king of the stricken empire. He established himself in the city of Harran, which had been for long the seat of the Assyrian military governors of North-western Mesopotamia.

In the following year (611 B.C.) Nabopolassar, King of Babylonia, moved northward with his army against the Assyrians. He defeated two tribes of Assyrian allies and captured a city, but did not reach Harran.

Nabopolassar returned in the spring of 610 B.C., but accomplished little. It was not until the autumn, when he was joined by the Scythians, that an advance against Harran was made. Ashur-uballit did not, however, await the arrival of the allies. He evacuated Harran, crossed the Euphrates, and retreated into Syria. The allies entered the city, which was plundered, the quantity of spoil being, as the chronicle asserts, “ beyond counting ”. The Scythians were subsequently blamed by Babylonia for the destruction of the temple. Nabopolassar returned home, leaving the Scythians in possession of the city, but placing a garrison in an advanced post.

In 609 B.C. Ashur-uballit endeavoured to recapture Harran. As in 616 B.C., Egypt came to the aid of Assyria. Pharaoh Necho in 609 B.C. succeeded his father, Psamtek I,

and appears to have made a fresh alliance with the Assyrians. His aim was manifestly to realize his father's dream of re-establishing the ancient Egyptian Empire in Palestine and Syria, and to bolster up the shrunken Assyrian Empire as a buffer state against the Scythians, Medes, and Babylonians. If his policy had proved successful, Assyria would have been to Egypt what Mitanni was in the Amarna period, and might have flourished once again.

Necho must have landed a large force on the Syrian coast. It effected a junction with the army of Ashur-uballit, the Assyrian king. The allies crossed the Euphrates and advanced against Harran. A small success fell to their arms. The advanced post held by the Babylonians was carried and the garrison slain. The allies pushed on and laid siege to the city of Harran. Several assaults were made, but the city resisted capture. After the siege had been carried on for about two months, the Babylonian king arrived with an army and relieved the defenders. The Assyrians and Egyptians must have retired across the Euphrates, because the Babylonians afterwards conducted a campaign against Armenia.

Here the Gadd Chronicle ends. Its reference to "a great army of Egyptians" which combined with that of the Assyrians in the unsuccessful attack on Harran, helps us, however, to grasp the significance of the military events of the following year, 608 B.C. Pharaoh Necho, operating with a fleet and army, had captured Gaza and Askalon. Josiah, King of Judah, opposed Necho but was defeated and slain at Megiddo (*2 Kings*, xxiii, 29). Josiah succeeded him, but was deposed by Necho, who placed on the throne another son of Josiah, named Eliakim, "and turned his name to Jehoiakim" (*2 Kings*, xxiii, 33-5).

In 605 B.C. the struggle with the allied forces reached a crisis. The Egyptians and the remnant of the Assyrian army

fought their last battle at Carchemish. Prince Nebuchadrezzar commanded the Babylonian army and won a decisive victory. Necho retreated hurriedly southward through Palestine, pursued by the Babylonians (*Jeremiah*). The pursuit was arrested by the death of the Babylonian king in his capital. Nebuchadrezzar returned home to confirm his succession.

Jeremiah, who opposed the pro-Egyptian party in Jerusalem, derided the retreating Egyptians, declaring that " the word of the Lord " was

" Against Egypt, against the army of Pharaoh-necho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah. . . .

" Go up into Gilead, and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vain shalt thou use many medicines; for thou shalt not be cured.

" The nations have heard of thy shame, and thy cry hath filled the land: for the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty, and they are fallen both together. . . . Pharaoh king of Egypt is but a noise " (*Jeremiah*, xlii).

The Egyptians arranged a treaty of peace with the Babylonians, and left Judah to its fate.¹

Jerusalem was captured by Nebuchadrezzar in 596 B.C., and he carried into captivity " all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained save the poorest sort of the people of the land " (*2 Kings*, xxiv, 8, 15).

A few years later Zedekiah rebelled. Nebuchadrezzar came against him. Jerusalem held out for eighteen months, but was starved into submission. Zedekiah was blinded, bound in chains, and carried to Babylonia where he remained in prison " till the day of his death ". Large numbers

¹ See Chapter IV.

of Jews were deported at the same time. Jerusalem was completely sacked and destroyed.

Nebuchadrezzar was a great soldier. He restored the ancient Babylonian Empire and not only thwarted Egypt's purpose in Syria and Palestine, but, if Josephus is to be credited, invaded and conquered the Delta area. A fragmentary record indicates that he did actually win a victory in Egypt against Pharaoh Amasis. He appears, however, to have owed much of his success as an empire builder to his alliance with the Medes. Indeed, it is possible, as has been suggested, that he was a vassal of the king of the Medes, whose daughter he had married. The Median Empire embraced part of Persia and the whole of Ancient Assyria, being bounded on the north-west by the River Halys. In 585 B.C. Nebuchadrezzar aided the Median king when a treaty was arranged with Lydia, the only great power which existed at the time in Asia Minor. Herodotus is our authority in this connexion. According to Josephus, Nebuchadrezzar besieged Tyre from 558 till 573 B.C., but never captured it. In the end a treaty was arranged.

A new era was inaugurated in Babylon. Nebuchadrezzar was a great builder. He followed his father's example by strengthening the fortifications of the ancient city. These were greatly extended, and a strong citadel palace was constructed, one of the features of which was the famous "hanging gardens". Temples were reconstructed not only in Babylon, but in other ancient cities, while old canals were cleared and new canals were dug. Babylon once again became the London of Western Asia, receiving a fresh lease of prosperity which was to endure, despite subsequent political changes, for several centuries.

We know little about Nebuchadrezzar's family connexions. He appears to have been of Chaldæan origin, and in his veins may have flowed the blood of some ancient Sumerian

family. It is undoubted that he owed much of his success as an administrator in the homeland to his policy of restoring the prestige of that powerful political force, the priesthood.

His son Amel-Marduk (the "Evil-Merodach" of the Bible) who succeeded him, reigned for only a few months. He made himself hateful to the priesthood and was assassinated. Then Neriglissar, who had married a daughter of Nebuchadrezzar, came to the throne. During his reign of about four years, he engaged himself in temple-building. His son Labashi-Marduk was a child and, after a reign of nine months, was deposed by the priests, who placed on the throne Nabonidus, one of their own class. He reigned from 556 till 540 B.C., and engaged himself chiefly in the work of restoring ancient temples. Modern archæologists have recognized in him one imbued with their own enthusiasm for the relics of the past. He studied old inscriptions, and took delight in reconstructing temples according to ancient plans and measurements. His own inscriptions sometimes aid us in dealing with Babylonian chronology. He states, for instance, that Naram Sin reigned 3200 years before his time, and that 700 years elapsed between the age of Hammurabi and that of the Kassite King, Burnaburiash.

The need of the age, however, was not for a royal scholar, but for a military ruler who would defend his country against the enemy. Nabonidus appears to have left the care of the army to his son Belshazzar: But unfortunately for father and son, a new conqueror and empire builder had arisen in the person of Cyrus, who was destined to inaugurate a new era in the history of the ancient world.

CHAPTER XVIII

Persia's Great Empire

The Conquests of Cyrus—Lydia and Babylonia subdued—Cyrus favours the Jews—Amasis of Egypt—Cambyses conquers Egypt—Darius I—Cult of Zoroaster—Behistun Rock Inscription—Persian Empire reorganized—Europe invaded—Scythians baffle Darius—Persian Fleet destroyed—Battle of Marathon—Xerxes and the Jews—Affairs in Greece—Themistocles's Naval Policy—Greece invaded by Xerxes—Defence of Thermopylæ—Last Stand of Leonidas—Athens sacked—Battle of Salamis—Flight of Xerxes—Mardonius defeated and slain—Ionia in Revolt—Xerxes plunders Babylon—Artaxerxes and the Jews—Ezra and Nehemiah—Jerusalem restored—Decline of Persia—Xenophon and the Spartan Ten Thousand.

The sudden rise to power of Cyrus, the Persian empire builder, stirred the imagination of the ancient world so that a cloud of legends gathered round his name. Herodotus tells that he was a grandson of Kyaxares, King of the Medes, who had taken and sacked Nineveh with the aid of his Scythian and Babylonian allies. Kyaxares dreamed wonderful dreams, and these were interpreted as indicating that his position would be usurped by his grandson—the son of his daughter, who was the wife of a Persian prince. It was decided that the babe should be put to death as soon as he was born, by being exposed among wild beasts among the mountains. The Median monarch's command was carried out, but the child was rescued by a herdsman and given by him to his wife whose own babe had been still-born. Similar stories of exposure at birth of a "child of destiny" were told regarding Sargon of Akkad, Gilgamesh, Semiramis, the Hindu heroine Shakuntala and the hero Karna, the Greek Perseus, the Celtic Lugh, &c.

It is uncertain whether or not Cyrus was related to Kyaxares. He was a prince of Anshan, the ancient Elamite province, which was seized by the Persians after it had been wasted by the Assyrians. It was claimed that Cyrus was an Achæmenian—that is, a descendant of the semi-mythical Persian patriarch Akhamanish, the Achæmenes of the Greeks, who was reported to have been fed and protected by an eagle when exposed at birth.

As king of Anshan, Cyrus acknowledged as his overlord Astyages, son of Kyaxares. Herodotus and Ctesias, the Greek physician who resided in Persia, agree that Cyrus overthrew Astyages and became the king of the Medes and Persians. He appears to have been favoured by the Median lords because of the pro-Scythian sympathies betrayed by Astyages. Ecbatana in the north had been the Median capital, but Cyrus transferred the seat of government to Susa, the ancient capital of Elam, and there he gradually consolidated his power. According to Herodotus, Cyrus kept Astyages at his court as a prisoner until that dethroned monarch died.

The cause of the Median king was, however, espoused by Cræsus, king of the wealthy Anatolian state of Lydia. It may be that he hoped to possess himself of part of the Median Empire. At any rate, in 547 B.C., he crossed the River Halys, which had been fixed by treaty with Kyaxares as the eastern frontier of his kingdom, and came into conflict with Cyrus in the vicinity of Boghâz-keui, the ancient Hittite capital. An indecisive battle was fought in the autumn, after which Cræsus withdrew his army, recrossed the Halys, and disbanded his infantry, believing that no further fighting would take place until the spring, when he hoped to co-operate with his allies, including the Egyptians and Babylonians.

Cyrus, however, like other great generals before and since,

achieved an overwhelming success by doing the unexpected. He pursued the Lydian army and suddenly appeared in force before Sardis, the capital, a distance of 400 miles from the Halys. Herodotus tells that the army of Cræsus consisted chiefly of cavalry against which Cyrus launched a camel corps. "The reason," Herodotus explains, "why Cyrus opposed his camels to the enemy's force was that the horse has a natural dread of the camel, and cannot abide either the sight or the smell of that animal. When the two armies joined battle, the Lydian horses immediately turned round and galloped off."

This story may or may not be authentic. It is certain, however, that Cræsus was defeated and forced to take refuge in the citadel. There he hoped to hold out until he received aid from his allies, but in a fortnight it was taken, and Cræsus was made a prisoner, but his life was spared by Cyrus. Lydia was added to the Persian empire, and with it Ionia, Caria, Lycia, and other Greek city states on the western coast, with the exception of Miletus.

In the next year (546 B.C.) Cyrus turned attention to Babylonia. He advanced from the north, crossing the Tigris at Arbela, but the defences planned by Nebuchadrezzar proved too strong for him. These included the Median wall and other works which permitted the land round the capital to be effectively flooded. He next invaded Southern Babylonia. Nabonidus caused the gods of the great cities in that area to be transferred to the capital.

Several years elapsed before Babylon was taken. These must have been disastrous for business in the great city. There was unrest not only among the commercial classes, but in the priesthood, owing to the loss of city gods. In 539 B.C. a crisis was reached. A revolution broke out in which Gubaru, who had held high command in the army of Nebuchadrezzar, took a prominent part. He had become

governor of the province of Gutium and espoused the Persian cause. He moved against Sippar, which opened its gates to him, and then advanced on the capital, which surrendered. Belshazzar had been previously defeated at Opis. According to the Biblical narrative he was slain on the night of a festival.

“The spoiler is come upon Babylon, and her mighty men are taken. . . . And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake. . . . The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned” (*Jeremiah*, li, 56-7).

In the following month Cyrus entered the city and was received with enthusiasm and as a liberator, by all classes. He performed the ceremony of “taking the hands” of the chief god Marduk (Merodach) and thus became king of all Babylonia. Nabonidus was, like Astyages and Cræsus, humanely treated and sent in exile to Carmania.

Cyrus restored the gods to the cities of Southern Babylonia, including Ur, Erech, &c., and otherwise placated his new subjects. According to the Old Testament, he showed favour to the Jews and made, in his first year, “a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem,” which was subsequently given full effect to by Darius. It provided for the rebuilding of the temple and the restoration of “the golden and silver vessels which Nebuchadrezzar took forth . . . and brought to Babylon.”

Cyrus was slain in 530 B.C. while engaged in subduing the Scythians in North-eastern Persia, and was succeeded by his son Cambyses. Little is known regarding this ruler, who, however, appears to have been a great war-lord like his father, but less tactful in his dealings with subject peoples. He subdued Syria and struck at the chief source

of the troubles created in Western Asia by invading Egypt in 525 B.C. Amasis (Ahmes II), who had been in league with Cræsus of Lydia, the Spartans, and Nabonidus of Babylon, and possessed a powerful navy, had died a few months previously, and his son Psamtek III was the reigning Pharaoh.

Cambyzes fought a successful battle at Pelusium, the Egyptian army consisting chiefly of mercenaries, and Psamtek fell back upon Memphis. Cambyzes then pushed forward and laid siege to the ancient city, which did not resist him long. Psamtek swore allegiance to him as a vassal, but afterwards became involved in a plot to throw off the Persian yoke, and was put to death.

Although the Greeks represented Cambyzes as a cruel tyrant in Egypt, it would appear that he was less black than they painted him. At Sais, for instance, he was honoured as the Pharaoh under the Egyptian fore-name of Mesut-re (the child of the sun-god), and he sacrificed at the altar of the goddess Neith. But the Greeks had no cause to love an imperious Persian intruder, and especially the son of the conqueror who had subdued their kinsmen in Asia Minor and made them vassals. Pharaoh Amasis, who was better loved by the Greeks than by the Egyptians, had encouraged Ionian and other merchants to found the commercial seaport of Naucratis, "the mighty in ships", in the Delta, after Cyrus had conquered Lydia, and even conferred upon the new town the right of self-government, so that it was in reality a Greek colony. To support his army of Greek mercenaries, Amasis, as a Ptolemaic text indicates, angered the Egyptian priests by appropriating the revenues of several temples, including that of Sais. Cambyzes appears to have found favour among the Egyptians by withdrawing the commercial privileges enjoyed by the Greeks, and the welcome accorded to him at Sais indicates that he restored to its

priesthood their lands and revenues. The Persian imperial policy was to practise religious tolerance in the foreign lands subdued.

Cambyses endeavoured to conquer Ethiopia, but in 524 B.C. met with a serious reverse. He remained in Egypt for a further period of two years, and a revolt broke out in the homeland. It was headed by Bardia, who claimed to be a son of Cyrus. Cambyses left Egypt to deal with him, but, according to Darius, committed suicide. Darius, who claimed to be a relative of Cambyses, led a counter-revolt, and had Bardia assassinated in a stronghold near Ecbatana. He was then proclaimed king and confirmed his power by marrying the widow and sister of Cambyses. The cult of Ahura Mazda (Ahura = lord; mazda = wise), which had been founded by Zarathushtra (Zoroaster), became the official religion. As in the case of the Assyrian Ashur, the god's symbol was an adaptation of the Egyptian winged disc of the god Horus. Little is known regarding Zarathushtra. He was abstract in his thinking and sought to abolish the old anthropomorphic gods. Whether or not he was influenced by earlier teachers who had perpetuated the doctrines of the Egyptian cult of Aton which had been introduced into Syria and must have been known in Mitanni, we have no means of knowing. The fact that so remarkable a teacher arose in Media and exercised a profound influence on religious thought, tends to indicate that we are hardly justified in regarding the people to whom he belonged as merely uncultured barbarians, and the subduers of peoples of higher intellectual capabilities than themselves.

Darius I recorded on his famous Behistun rock inscription the suppression of various insurrections. He had to deal with revolts in Lydia, Egypt, and Babylon. The siege of Babylon was of short duration, but its fortifications suffered greatly.

Darius proved himself a greater administrator than Cyrus. He reorganized the Persian Empire on a system of satrapies. A satrap was a civil governor, but without military jurisdiction. He was responsible for the collection of taxes, and remitted the annual tribute to Susa, the capital of the empire. The peace was kept by the military governor, and the edicts of the emperor delivered by the royal secretary. There were in all twenty-three satrapies, the farthest east being that of the Punjab, and the farthest west that of Ionia in the north, and Egypt in the south. The empire flourished and immense revenues flowed into the Susan exchequer.

Darius twice invaded Europe. On the first occasion (510 B.C.) he crossed the Bosphorus by a bridge of boats and overran Thrace. Then he crossed the Danube and penetrated Southern Russia with purpose to subdue the Scythians. But his hope of fighting a pitched battle was never realized. The Scythians laid waste their country, divided their mobile army of mounted men, and adopted tactics similar to those favoured by the Boers in the latter part of the South African War. The Scythian De Wets, ever "on the run", kept the Persians following them hither and thither for about two months until provisions ran short, attacked them when at meals and at night, always retiring when the Persian infantry formed for battle. Darius, Herodotus tells us, ultimately found himself "at his wits' end". The Scythians refused his offer to engage in a pitched battle, and when he asked them for "earth and water" in token of surrender, they sent him a bird, a mouse, a frog, and five arrows. Darius thought this strange gift indicated that they intended to surrender, but he was warned by a councillor that what the Scythians meant was: "Unless, Persians, ye can turn into birds and fly up into the sky, or become mice and burrow under the ground, or make yourself frogs and take refuge

in the fens, ye shall never escape from this land, but die pierced by our arrows."

The Scythians meanwhile sent a force of their mounted men to the Danube to ask the Ionians to break the bridge of boats and thus prevent Darius retreating. Miltiades, the Athenian, who ruled the Thracian Chersonese (Gallipoli) and had been forced to become a Persian vassal, proposed to sail away. He was opposed, however, by Histiaëus of Miletus, who recognized that if Darius were overthrown, he and others like him would cease to reign as kings. The bridge was partly broken, but the Ionians remained. Darius conducted a sudden retreat, deserting his camp by night, and leaving behind a portion of his army which was "weak and unequal to hardship" owing to sickness and shortage of food and water. He thus escaped from the Scythians, who were preparing to fall upon the Persians in force. The Danube was reached in the darkness, and there was dismay when it was found the bridge was broken. Shouts were raised for Histiaëus of Miletus, who heard the summons and came with his fleet to complete the bridge, across which the Persians were safely conveyed. Darius afterwards passed through Thrace and across the Bosphorus. Histiaëus was taken into high favour and was transferred to Susa, much against his will, however, as one of the royal councillors. A Persian army of 80,000 men was left in Thrace, under the command of Megabazus, who extended the European part of the Persian Empire to the frontier of Thessaly.

Darius had planned to conquer Greece. In 500 B.C., however, a revolt broke out in Ionia. The Athenians and Eretrians responded to the call for assistance from their Anatolian kinsmen, the former sending twenty and the latter five warships. An attack was afterwards made on Sardis, the centre of Persian power in Asia Minor, which was taken, sacked, and burned. The Persians, coming up in force,

drove back the allies, and the Athenians and Eretrians sailed home to Greece. Darius waged a vigorous war against the rebels. Six years, however, were occupied in subduing the city states. Histiaëus, who had been sent back from Susa in the third year of the war, became a pirate and was captured and executed.

Darius resolved to punish the Athenians for their share in the Ionic revolt. Mardonius was given command of an army and fleet. In 492 B.C., however, the fleet was destroyed by a storm when attempting to coast round the north shore of the Ægean. Three hundred Persian galleys were wrecked on the rocky peninsula of Athos. Not long afterwards the army was engaged by Thracians and suffered so severely that the advance on Greece had to be postponed.

In the following year an expedition of 500,000 men was fitted out and transported to Attica in safety. Hippias, who had ruled Athens and been expelled for his tyranny, acted as guide to the Persians, and a landing was effected on the Plain of Marathon about twenty miles north-east of Athens, in 490 B.C.

The Athenians took instant steps to oppose the enemy, and sent an appeal to Sparta for assistance. But although the Spartans were willing, they were not ready to give immediate support to the Athenians. They were about to celebrate a festival and would not march forth until full moon. This delay, enforced by a religious consideration, was only one of five days' duration, but had Athens failed, these five days would have involved all Greece in disaster.

Miltiades was the military genius of the hour. He it was who, not without difficulty, prevailed upon the Greeks to march against the Persians, whose plan of campaign was to attack Athens by land and sea—a part of their army marching over the hills and another landing from the fleet from the Gulf of Piræus. The Athenian army, supported by a force



D 635

Photo. Alinari

PERSIAN SOLDIERS

From a reconstruction in the Louvre, Paris, of a portion of the Archers' Frieze in the Palace of Darius I at Susa.

of Plataeans, advanced towards Marathon and took up position on the lower slopes of the mountains, blocking the two roads leading to Athens. On the wide plain between two marshes and mountain ridges lay the Persian army, their ships having been beached. Miltiades recognized that the salvation of Athens would be achieved by striking a sudden and unexpected blow. The enemy had the advantage in numbers, but the Greeks were more heavily armed than the Persians, and each soldier was inspired with patriotic ardour. Athens was in peril, and an enemy victory would bring slavery or death.

Miltiades experienced some difficulty in prevailing upon some of the generals to consent to an immediate advance against the Persians. In the end, however, he prevailed, and he planned and directed operations. The Greek army was extended to sweep the plain between the marshes, its right wing resting on the southern marsh and its left reaching towards the mountains in the west. The centre was somewhat weak.

It surprised the Persians that the Greeks should venture to hazard an attack on an army ten times larger than their own. They were hurriedly formed up to fight a defensive action. Miltiades had, however, achieved a preliminary success by rapid movements. His army was only a mile distant from the enemy when the order to attack was given. The Greeks charged forward on the run without horsemen or archers, but in close array. According to Herodotus the Athenians were the first of the Greeks "who introduced the custom of charging the enemy at a run". It may have, however, been an Achæan, as it was certainly a Celtic custom, which was perpetuated by the Scottish Highlanders.

Fierce fighting took place, and for a time the issue seemed uncertain. The Persians prevailed in the centre, pushing back the thinly held line. But both the Greek wings drove

all before them. The right wing of the Persians was broken and thrust into the northern marsh, in which many perished, and the left was driven towards the beach. The two Greek wings then closed on the Persian centre and the great army of Darius was shattered. A fierce hand-to-hand conflict was fought down to the beach. The Persians fled in a rabble towards their ships, and the Athenians and Platæans "hung upon the runaways", as Herodotus puts it, "and cut them down". Hurriedly the Persians set to launching and boarding their ships, while some of the Greeks cried aloud for fire, so as to destroy the fleet. Most of the ships, however, were launched, the Athenians being able to capture or destroy only seven of them.

The Persians had been able to effect their escape by sheer force of numbers. Of their army of 100,000 about 6400 had fallen, while only about 200 of the Greek 10,000 had been slain. It was an overwhelming victory against desperate odds. But the moral effect of it was greater than the material. The myth of Persian invincibility was shattered and Greece was thrilled to the core. If the Athenians had been defeated, all the Greek states, with the exception of Sparta, would have yielded to the Persians without daring to show resistance. The battle of Marathon, therefore, not only saved Athens, but saved Greece, and it sounded the first knell of Persian supremacy. It is, indeed, one of the great decisive battles in history, one which influenced the ultimate fate of many peoples.

After putting to sea in flight from Marathon, the Persian commander was prevailed upon to sail round the coast towards the Piræus and attack Athens. But Miltiades did not tarry at Marathon. He conducted a forced march by the hill roads back to the city, and when the Persian fleet hove in sight, the victorious Athenians could be seen drawn up in battle array on the southern slope of the hill

outside Athens. "The barbarian (Persian) fleet," says Herodotus, "lay to off Phalerum, which was at that time the haven of Athens; but after resting awhile upon their oars, they departed and sailed away to Asia."

When the moon was at the full, the Spartans moved towards Athens. "So eager," Herodotus relates, "had they been to arrive in time, that they took but three days to reach Attica from Sparta. They came, however, too late for the battle; yet, as they had a longing to behold the Medes, they continued their march to Marathon and there viewed the slain. Then, after giving the Athenians all praise for their achievement, they departed and returned home."¹

Darius was so enraged over the Athenian success at Marathon, that he resolved to lead an overwhelming force in person into Europe and accomplish the subjugation of Greece. In 487 B.C., however, a revolt broke out in Egypt under the leadership of Kabbash, who proclaimed himself the Pharaoh, and before it was suppressed Darius I died (485 B.C.), and he was succeeded by his son Xerxes (485-465 B.C.), who, through his mother, was the grandson of Cyrus I and nephew of Cambyzes. Xerxes was a tall, handsome man and a typical Oriental despot. But he lacked the military genius of his father and grandfather. Exceedingly vain, inclined to indolence and susceptible to flattery, he was but a puppet in the hands of clever intriguers. He had neither personal courage nor moral stability, and although generally good-natured was subject to fits of ungovernable rage which prompted him to commit acts of savage cruelty. We know him as the friend of the Jews and the revengeful enemy of the Greeks, especially those of Athens and Sparta, who had dared to flout his power. He inherited a great empire. "This is Ahasuerus

¹ Book VI, 102-20.

(as he was known to the Jews) which reigned from India even unto Ethiopia, over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces." He revelled in the pomp and luxury of his brilliant court and shone at his feasts.

"In the third year of his reign, he made a feast unto all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, being before him: when he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom, and the honour of his excellent majesty. . . . The king made a feast unto all the people that were present in Shushan (Susa) the palace, both unto great and small, seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace; where were white, green, and blue hangings fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble: the beds were of gold and silver, upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black marble. And they gave them drink in vessels of gold . . . and royal wine in abundance."¹

To subdue the Greeks and avenge Marathon, Xerxes planned a great invasion, drawing on the resources of his vast empire until he had assembled a great army and a numerous fleet.

Ten years had elapsed since Miltiades won his notable victory over Darius. During that period there had been much unrest in Greece. Sparta experienced domestic troubles with an eccentric king and war had broken out between the Athenians and Æginetans, and dragged on without either side achieving a permanent decision. It was during this war that Themistocles, the Athenian leader, came into prominence. He was a far-seeing although corrupt statesman. His policy of making Athens a strong naval power, which he promoted with much energy, made him the real saviour of Greece in its hour of peril. His chief opponent was Aristides, known as "the Just", because of his integrity and high sense of honour. He was opposed

¹ *The Book of Esther*, Chap. I.

to Themistocles, and although he was justified in libelling him in connexion with his corrupt practices, especially his habit of taking bribes, he was, although an upright man, a lesser statesman, as events proved.

It chanced that the silver-mines of Laurium, which were owned by the Athenian state, brought a large surplus to the treasury. One party proposed that the sum of a hundred talents should be distributed among the citizens, but Themistocles, who had already had the Piræus fortified, advocated the building of 200 vessels, so that Athens might have a strong navy. He had his way, despite the opposition of Aristides, and when that politician brought to light certain cases of embezzlement of public funds and even made Themistocles appear suspect, a crisis ensued which ended in the decision that Aristides should be sent into honourable exile.

In 481 B.C. Greece learned of the contemplated invasion of Xerxes. A conference of the Greek powers was summoned, under the presidency of Sparta, and was attended by all except Argos and Thebes. Athens and Ægina agreed to patch up their differences, and the Spartan, Euænetus, was chosen as commander-in-chief of the armies, while another Spartan, Eurybiades, became admiral of the allied fleet, the Æginetans and Corinthians being jealous of the Athenians and refusing to serve under Themistocles. But it was Themistocles who really directed operations through Eurybiades and prevented him from ruining the cause of Greece on the sea.

Xerxes, according to Greek accounts—for no Persian records of the campaign have survived—had an army variously estimated at from 80,000 to 5,000,000 men. It may be that the latter figures represent in addition to the fighting men all those engaged on lines of communication and in the preparations for the campaign. The Persian navy

was made up of vessels from the maritime states, including Ionia, Cilicia, Cyprus, Phœnicia, and Egypt and numbered about 1200 vessels of war, on each of which was, in addition to the crew, a force of Persian soldiers. There were also hundreds of transports, &c.

Xerxes had his army moved into Europe across a bridge of boats which spanned the Hellespont (Dardanelles). It was marched through Thrace in the spring of 480 B.C., and on reaching Macedonia was joined by a force under the vassal Prince Alexander. At Therma (Salonika), where Xerxes halted, he was joined by his great fleet.

The Greeks at first resolved to defend Thessaly, and their allied army concentrated in the valley of the Peneus and pushed on towards the narrow Pass of Tempe, where a small army could hold up a large one coming from Macedonia. Xerxes might have met with effective resistance at this point, but in his camp were exiled Thessalian princes who informed him how he could surround the Greek army—by sending part of his army through the passes which led from Western Macedonia while the Greeks were kept engaged in the pass. Alexander of Macedon, who was in sympathy with Greece, sent a warning to the Greeks which resulted in an immediate decision to retreat. The Thessalians and other tribes immediately submitted to Xerxes, and the Persians swept unopposed southward through Thessaly.

To save Central Greece from invasion it was resolved to defend the pass of Thermopylæ, which is about two miles long. It skirts the cliffs of Mount Callidromus on the shore of the Malian Gulf. It is roughly 50 feet wide at its entrance and at one point "it is," as Herodotus says (7, 176), "only wide enough for a single carriage." About half-way through the pass the level ground expands somewhat, and there a temple of Artemis stood and near it an ancient fort which was partly in ruins. In this pass Leonidas,

King of Sparta, took up position with a small force of Spartans supported by Bœotians (some of whom came unwillingly), but inter-state jealousies prevented the main army of Peloponnesians moving northward to resist the Persians in force.

The great fleet was based on Artemisium, to defend the Eubœan Strait and the Malian Gulf. Eurybiades, the high admiral, had to be bribed by Themistocles, who had himself received a higher bribe, to make a stand against the Persian navy. It was well for the Greeks that Xerxes did not realize the power which his war vessels gave him. It never occurred to him to turn the Grecian position with his navy.

When the Persian fleet sailed southward from Salonika, which it did not leave until a fortnight after the army, it did not pass beyond the promontory of Cape Sepias. A number of the vessels were beached on the rough coast, while others cast anchor. A fierce north-easterly gale broke out on the first night and lasted for three days. Scores of Persian vessels were wrecked.

When the Persian admirals found the Greek navy prepared to oppose them, a squadron of about 200 ships was sent down the eastern coast of Eubœa so as to enter the Strait of Eubœa from the south and thus confine the Greek fleet between the island and the mainland. Another storm broke out, however, and this squadron was wrecked.

Two days of fighting took place between the Greek and Persian fleets. The invaders suffered serious losses, the Greek tactics being superior and the seamanship and morale excellent. On the third day, however, the defenders found it necessary to retire.

A heroic struggle had meantime been waged by Leonidas in the Pass of Thermopylæ. Xerxes sent forward a heavy force of Medes to cut their way through, but they were thrown back in disorder. Man to man the Asiatics were no

match for the athletic and heavily-armed Spartans. The attack was renewed again and again, but the defence could not be broken. Then Xerxes sent forward his own famous bodyguard of Persians known as "The Immortals". But the Spartans were again victorious, and when darkness fell the situation remained unchanged. Xerxes was furious, and next day renewed the struggle, hoping to overcome the defenders by sheer force of numbers. But the second day ended like the first. The morale of the attackers had begun to weaken, and bodies of the Asiatics had to be driven forward by whips wielded by the officers. Had the Spartans received the promised aid from the homeland, the invaders might have been held back and even defeated.

On the evening of the second day a Malian Greek in the Persian army was bribed to lead a force of the enemy over the hills by a difficult path so as to take the defenders in the rear. Leonidas had placed a column of Phocians to block this path, but they were taken by surprise in the darkness and compelled to retreat towards the summit of Mount Callidromus. In the morning the Spartans found themselves hemmed in by the Asiatics in front and rear. Leonidas did not yield, however. He resolved to fight to the death. Dividing his force, he sent his auxiliaries to hold back the Persians in his rear, but owing either to blundering or cowardice, they retreated or fled eastward.

Leonidas, who had remained with three hundred Spartans, continued the fight until he found he was to be attacked in the rear. Then he retired upon the wider space and inflicted severe losses on the enemy. When he himself fell, a fierce struggle was waged over his body. The last stand was made on a small eminence where the remnant of the small Spartan force was gradually overcome by javelins and arrows.

The Pass of Thermopylæ was then won, but at fearful

cost to the enemy. Their losses were heavy but their numbers were great. More serious than their actual losses in men was the moral effect of the gallant stand made by Leonidas and his heroic band. The Persians had learned to fear the Greek fighting men. They believed that every Greek soldier was as heroic as a Spartan, and it was a half-disheartened army which afterwards moved forward to continue the struggle for the possession of Central Greece.

Meanwhile the Greek fleet retired to the Bay of Salamis, opposite Athens, and there awaited the course of events. The Persian army swept southward through Bœotia into Attica. Athens was doomed to fall, and Themistocles transported the aged and all women and children to a place of safety. A small force remained in the city.

Themistocles recognized that the hope of Greece lay in its fleet. If the Persian fleet were defeated, the Persian army would be compelled to evacuate Greece because its communications would be threatened. Themistocles was confident of victory, but he experienced considerable difficulty in prevailing upon the admirals of the various states to fight the battle of Salamis.

Athens fell and was occupied by the enemy. Its temples and private houses were given to the flames and the walls were levelled. The aim of Xerxes was evidently to terrorize the other Greek city states. But Athens remained strong at sea. It was represented by 180 triremes in the Greek fleet of 378 lying in the Bay of Salamis.

Some of the admirals wished to retire upon Corinth. A wall had been hurriedly built across the narrow Corinthian peninsula to hold back the enemy. But Themistocles threatened that if the ships of the other states should be withdrawn, he would sail away to Italy with the refugees, and there found a new Athenian state. In the end, the Greek fleet was forced to remain intact, for the Persians

sent a squadron to block the western entrance of the Bay of Eleusis, while an attack was made at the eastern entrance opposite Athens.

Xerxes was confident of success. He seemed to have the small Greek fleet at his mercy. He had a throne erected on the slope of Mount Ægialeus, and seated himself in it to watch the battle in the bay below. Byron refers to this feature of the dramatic struggle in his vigorous poem "The Isles of Greece":

A king sate on the rocky brow
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;
And ships, by thousands, lay below,
And men in nations;—all were his!
He counted them at break of day—
And, when the sun set, where were they?

Morning broke with a blustering south-west wind and a rough sea, but the Persians, rowing against wind and tide, went forward to the attack. The Greeks seemed reluctant to accept battle: they began to "back water", keeping close to the shore. The Persians advanced impetuously in the narrow space and soon began to suffer from sheer weight of numbers. Then the Athenians opened the attack and a fierce action was waged for hours. There was little room for manœuvring. The Greeks fought stubbornly, and large numbers of the Persian ships were disabled, sunk, taken, or driven ashore. "For as the Greeks," says Herodotus, "fought in order and kept their line, while the barbarians were in confusion and had no plan in anything they did, the issue of the battle could scarce be other than it was." The Persians were thoroughly beaten, although their fleet greatly outnumbered that of the Greeks. In the last phase of the battle the remnant of the Persian fleet took flight, and was pursued by the Athenians and Æginetians.

The enemy were still twice as strong as the defenders, but had been thoroughly demoralized.

Xerxes himself lost heart. He feared that the victorious Greek fleet would proceed to the Dardanelles, and, severing his bridge of boats, cut off his retreat. He resolved, therefore, to return to Asia without delay, leaving an army of picked men behind, under the command of Mardonius, to complete the conquest of Greece. Themistocles could not prevail upon the Greek admirals to follow up their success by sailing to the Dardanelles, and Xerxes was able to return in safety to Asia.

Mardonius retreated to Thessaly for the winter, but in the spring of 479 B.C. returned southward and re-occupied Athens. By this time, however, the Spartans were thoroughly roused, and an army of 5000 under the command of Pausanias, nephew of the heroic Leonidas, came to the aid of the allies. The Greek army was ultimately 100,000 strong, but was less than half the size of the army of Mardonius.

A battle was fought at Platæa in Southern Bœotia. The Greeks were changing position when the Persians, thinking they were retreating, fell upon them in confused pursuit. As it chanced, the enemy first attacked the Spartans in full strength and were not only quickly out-fought, but driven back in confusion. Mardonius was killed; and then terror spread through the Persian army. Artabazus, who was in the rear, fled with 40,000 men towards Thessaly before the battle had ended. A decisive victory was achieved before the entire Greek army could be brought into action.

On the same day a Greek squadron which had been dispatched to Asiatic waters achieved another victory. The Persian fleet was found to have been beached on the promontory of Mycale, near Miletus. The Greeks landed, defeated a land force from Lydia, and captured the entrenched camp and three hundred ships.

This success thrilled Ionia, which rose in revolt against Persia. Xerxes was unable to strike another blow. His invasion of Greece had ended in disaster to army and fleet, and Ionia was forever lost, as were all the islands on the coast.

It was probably after the return of Xerxes that Babylon revolted. A leader named Shamashirba proclaimed himself king. The capital was besieged and ultimately taken. Xerxes wreaked his vengeance on the unfortunate city. The great Temple of Marduk was plundered of all its treasure and laid in ruins, and other buildings, including the fortifications, were also destroyed.

In 465 B.C., fifteen years after his invasion of Greece, Xerxes was murdered, and his youngest son, Artaxerxes (the "Long-handed"), who reigned for forty years, was placed on the throne. Early in his reign a revolt broke out in Egypt. It was headed by the Libyan Prince Inarus, who had received aid from the Athenians. In the end the Persians prevailed, Inarus was crucified, and the Athenians were forced to relinquish their claim upon Cyprus.

It was Artaxerxes who showed favour to the Jews by permitting them to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, which had lain in ruins since 586 B.C. Cyrus had permitted the first contingent of Babylonian captives to return in 538 B.C. In 516 B.C. the temple had been rebuilt. During the reign of Artaxerxes, Ezra had led back a large number of Jews who had remained in Babylonia. Then Nehemiah, the cup-bearer of the Persian king in his great palace at Persepolis, received intelligence from Jerusalem that the people were "in great affliction and reproach" owing to the defenceless state of the city. He sorrowed greatly, and one day when he waited on the king, Nehemiah was "sad in his presence". The prophet's own narrative states:

“Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart.”

Nehemiah related the cause of his grief and received permission from Artaxerxes to visit Jerusalem and restore its defences. He received letters for the governors of the satrapies through which he had to pass, and one, Nehemiah tells, to

“Asaph the keeper of the king’s forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into.”¹

After residing in Jerusalem for twelve years, Nehemiah paid a visit to the Persian monarch “in the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes”. It is possible that the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem followed upon the revolt in Syria of Megabyzus, who had previously suppressed the Egyptian revolution.

Xerxes II, who succeeded his father in 424 B.C., was murdered, after a reign of about six weeks, by his brother Ochus, who assumed the name of Darius II and reigned till 405 B.C. In 410 B.C. Egypt revolted, and it remained free for sixty years. Other revolts broke out in the heart of the empire and in Lydia.

Darius II died in 405 B.C. and was succeeded by his son Arsikas, who assumed the throne name of Artaxerxes II. His struggle with his brother Cyrus is dealt with in Chapter XX.

¹ *Nehemiah*, Chapters I and II.

Ancient Greek Chronology

ANCIENT GREEK CHRONOLOGY

First Olympic Year, 776 B.C.
Solon archon of Athens, 594 B.C.
Themistocles archon of Athens, 493 B.C.
Thrace and Macedonia subdued by Persians, 492 B.C.
Battle of Marathon, 490 B.C.
Xerxes invades Greece, 480 B.C.
Mardonius defeated and slain at Plataea, 479 B.C.
Confederacy of Delos, 478 B.C.
Greeks defeated in Egypt by Persians, 454 B.C.
Peloponnesian War, 431-404 B.C.
Syracusans defeat Athenians, 413 B.C.
Athenian Empire passes to Sparta, 405 B.C.
Battle of Cunaxa and retreat of 10,000 Greeks under Xenophon, 401 B.C.
Rise of Thebes, 378-359 B.C.
Philip seizes government of Macedonia, 359 B.C.
Birth of Alexander the Great, 356 B.C.
Philip defeats Athenians and Thebans, 338 B.C.

ALEXANDER, THE PTOLEMIES AND SELEUCIDS

Alexander sets out for Asia, 334 B.C.
Battle of Issus, 333 B.C.
Egypt occupied, 332 B.C.
Battle of Arbela, 331 B.C.
Alexander in India, 327-325 B.C.
Death of Alexander, 323 B.C.
Ptolemy I becomes King of Egypt and Seleucus I King in Mesopotamia and Syria, 306 B.C.
Battle of Ipsus, 301 B.C.
Parthians becoming powerful, 250 B.C.
Antiochus III begins to reign, 223 B.C.
"Rosetta stone" decree, 195 B.C.
Battle of Magnesia, 187 B.C.
Seleucid Empire divided, 112 B.C.
Romans depose last Seleucid, 65 B.C.
Cleopatra of Egypt restored by Cæsar, 48 B.C.
Cleopatra kills herself, 30 B.C.

CHAPTER XIX

Empire of Athens

The Greek States—Macedonia—Greek Cities of Asia Minor—Ionia as Cradle of Hellenism—Golden Age of Athens—Confederacy of Delos—Successes against Persia—Hegemony of Athens—Pericles in Power—Delian Treasury removed to Athens—Allies as Athenian Vassals—Pericles the Builder—Great Art Movement—Phedias the Sculptor—Image of Victory and Olympian Zeus—The Elgin Marbles—Athens the “School of Hellas”—Athenian Sea Power—Persians bribe Enemies of Athens—Athenian Fleet destroyed in Egypt—Spartan Confederacy against Athens—Peloponnesian War—Career of Alcibiades—Disastrous Sicilian Expedition—Athens captured—The Spartan Hegemony—Rise of Thebes—Philip of Macedon.

The invasion of Europe by Xerxes was undertaken to subdue and punish a few small powers which he must have regarded with contempt. Even after he met with disaster, he could not have imagined that the day was to come when the vast Persian army would be subdued and dominated by what was to become known in history as “the Greek spirit”—that the heaven of Greece was destined to leaven “the whole lump” of Asia and even the ancient kingdom of the Pharaohs.

Greece proper was about the size of Scotland; its city powers possessed territory no larger than some Scottish counties. As Thucydides says, “there was (before the Persian period) no union of subject cities round a great state, no spontaneous combination of equals for confederate expeditions; what fighting there was consisted merely of local warfare between rival neighbours.” Xerxes forced

the Greeks to form an alliance, but it was only a partial and, as events proved, a temporary one; and the alliance was never free from petty jealousies between rivals, which more than once threatened to bring about irretrievable disaster. But for the example shown by Leonidas and the shrewd and far-seeing policy of Themistocles, Xerxes might have worked his will in Europe and "the glory that was Greece" would never have been.

The strength of Greece, which enabled it to resist the immense power of Persia and to emerge triumphant from the ordeal, was centred in what Xerxes regarded as its weakness. Its lack of unity was a product of Greek individualism, of the Greek love of freedom and independence. The Hellenes at home suffered from the defect of their qualities. But their institutions favoured the production of great men and of soldiers who in their day were matchless in war.

The various states had not all the same ideas of government, although they spoke a common language,¹ revered Delphi as a common religious sanctuary, observed the same festivals, and once a year held a general tribal assembly. One main group, of which Sparta was the chief, favoured an aristocratic, and another, led by Athens, a democratic form of government. The idea of absolute monarchy as known to the Persians and Egyptians was foreign to the Greeks. Sparta had its kings, but they were subject to the control of the five Ephors who were elected annually from all classes of the people. The kings might be punished and even put to death. Tyrants arose and held sway in democratic states, but were always hated, and it was regarded as a public service to murder them. The idea of hereditary kingship had not survived in Greece from Homeric times, except to a limited degree in Sparta, where it was fused with the influence of Egyptian dualism, for there were in reality two

¹ Of course, there were various distinctive dialects of Greek.

kings, one apparently a priestly ruler and the other a warlord. On the other hand, in Macedonia, which, although impregnated more or less with Greek culture, was not a part of Greece proper, there were hereditary kings, but their powers were restricted by the assembly of free Macedonians.

The Greek cities in Asia resembled those of the homeland. They formed independent states. Their origin is obscure. It would appear, however, that some came into existence as trading colonies during the period of Cretan supremacy and were subject, as was Ephesus, in their early times, to direct or indirect Egyptian influence, as well as to the cultural and political influence of Syro-Cappadocia and Phrygia. During the "Dark Age" in Greece which followed upon the decline of Mycenæan power, migrations from the Greek mainland strengthened the Greek element in the Anatolian cities to such an extent that they became essentially Greek. Indeed, there are some who would have it that the origin of Hellenism is to be traced to Ionia, and that owing to Ionic reaction on the motherland Greece ultimately emerged from its "Dark Age" into a new dawn.

The "Golden Age" of Athens dates from the time of the Persian invasion. Themistocles had so greatly increased the prestige of his city state that it took the lead in forming a league which included the ancient rivals of the homeland, the islands of the Ægean and the Greek cities of Anatolia. It became known as the Confederacy of Delos. That sacred island was selected as the annual meeting-place of the delegates and for the common treasury. The various states undertook to provide ships or money to prosecute the war against Persia, so that it might be expelled from those strongholds which still enabled it to give trouble to the allies. In the course of ten years almost the entire coastland between Asia Minor and Greece was liberated, and another Persian invasion thus rendered impossible. The various towns from

which the Persians were driven became members of the league. Cimon, son of Miltiades, the victor of Marathon, who had fought at Salamis, was at first associated with Aristides in the command of the Athenian fleet, and ultimately became sole commander. Among his successes were the destruction of a fleet of 200 Persian ships which he followed up the Eurymedon, and, on the same day, a victory over the Persian army, which he landed to attack (469 B.C.).

Meanwhile Themistocles had fallen into disgrace because he was suspected of having had dealings with Pausanias of Sparta, the victor of Plataea, who had been involved in an intrigue with Xerxes against the liberties of Greece. Pausanias, to escape arrest, sought sanctuary in a temple, in which he was enclosed so that he died of starvation. Themistocles, who was innocent, fled to Asia, was received and honoured by Artaxerxes and made tyrant of Magnesia, where, after a few years, he died (about 460 B.C.). Aristides died in 468 B.C., and Cimon, his former supporter, became the leader of the Athenian conservatives. When Sparta was shaken by an internal revolt, Cimon sent four thousand soldiers to assist that city. The efforts of this army were not successful, and the Spartans insulted the Athenians and sent them home. Cimon was railed at by the anti-Spartan party at Athens. His fault was that he worked for all Greece and not, like the local patriots, for the prosperity of Athens alone.

The Athenian democratic party, led by Ephialtes and Pericles, revised the constitution and definitely pursued the aim of establishing the hegemony of Athens in Greece and overseas at the expense of Sparta. Cimon was banished, and Pericles became, as leader of the democratic party, the ruler of Athens.

A change then took place in the attitude of Athens towards her allies. Most of them had contributed money instead of



ships, and great wealth accumulated at Delos. In 454 the treasury was transferred from that island to Athens, and that state became the collector of tribute from the various members of the confederacy. Many of the allies of Athens thus sunk to the level of vassals and an Athenian empire came into being. Samos, Lesbos, and Chios, however, continued to contribute ships as members of the old confederacy.

Under the direction of Pericles Athens prospered. The rebuilding of the city was proceeded with, and its fortifications were strengthened by the construction of the "Long Walls" which extended to the Piræus and Phalerum, forming a great triangle and securing the communications between the city and its seaports. Trade flourished, especially with the Anatolian states, and the merchants of Athens acquired great wealth. To solve the unemployment problem, a shrewd colonial policy was promoted which further increased the revenues of Athens. Pericles was a great builder. His greatest achievements were the stately edifices on the Acropolis. There the famous Parthenon came into existence. It was the most magnificent of Athenian temples. The architect was Ictinus, and the great sculptor Phidias adorned it with his statues and reliefs, the chief work of art being the statue of Athene, about $41\frac{1}{2}$ feet high, which was constructed of gold and ivory and was studded with precious stones. It is estimated that the robes alone required about £10,000 worth of gold. The goddess was depicted with a spear in one hand and an image of Victory in the other. This statue was without its equal in Greece until, a few years later, Phidias constructed his colossal Zeus at Olympia, the exposed parts of the body being of ivory and the robes of beaten gold. The great sculptor had many accomplished helpers who worked under his direction and produced such masterpieces as the famous Elgin marbles. Another genius whose services

were at the disposal of Pericles and other patrons of art was Polygnotus, the great painter.

This great art movement in Athens, which followed upon the triumph over Persia, was made possible by the accumulation of wealth by tribute and trade. Thucydides declared that Pericles had dishonoured Athens by using the gold contributed by her allies to adorn her streets and temples, and compared the city to a vain and giddy woman who decked herself with ill-gotten jewels. Pericles, on the other hand, contended that Athens had a right to make whatever use she pleased of the funds of the confederacy so long as she kept Persia at bay. Thucydides shared the fate of Cimon and was sent into exile.

“As a city”, declared Pericles, in a famous funeral oration, “we are the school of Hellas; while I doubt if the world can produce a man who, where he has only himself to depend upon, is equal to so many emergencies, and graced by so happy a versatility as the Athenian. . . . We have forced every sea and land to be the highway of our daring, and everywhere, whether for evil or for good, have left imperishable monuments behind us.”¹

The strength of Athens as a ruler of empire was based on its great wealth, which made it capable of maintaining a strong navy. When its prosperity was threatened it entered upon a period of decline. Pericles retained the chief direction of Athenian affairs for forty years, but his costly public works exhausted the treasury and he was prompted to increase the obligations of the allies. Meanwhile Persian gold was liberally spent to sow dissension among the subject states, and Greek rebels were welcomed at the Persian court. A disaster which tended to weaken the Athenian power was sustained in Egypt in 454 B.C. Two hundred galleys had been sent to assist the Pharaoh Inarus against

¹ Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, Book II.

the Persians, whose army under the satrap Megabyzus had set out to reconquer the lost province. The Athenian ships sailed up the Nile as far as Memphis, were cut off by the enemy and totally destroyed, while only a remnant of the heroic fighting force escaped.

Sparta was ever threatening to strike a vigorous blow against Athens, but first a five-years' peace and then a thirty-years' peace was arranged, and Athens was enabled to work her will with Bœotia and Eubœa and other discontented states. A peace with Persia was concluded in 445 B.C.

In 431 the Spartans broke the long truce which had lasted for about a dozen years, and headed a confederacy against Athens. The conflict which ensued is known as the Peloponnesian War and lasted for twenty-seven years. In the second year of the war a plague broke out in Athens, and one of its ultimate victims was Pericles. The demagogue Cleon, a tanner by trade, had been rising into prominence, and took a leading part in Athenian affairs until his death in battle in 422 B.C. In the following year, after the war had gone on for ten years with varying fortunes for the combatants, a fifty-years' peace was arranged between Athens and Sparta by Nicias, a prominent Athenian statesman and general. The terms of the peace were not, however, completely carried out and the seeds of dissension remained. Athens had won nothing on land, but her fleet remained unimpaired. The peace endured for seven years, but Sparta and Athens remained rivals, and, as Thucydides says, "did each other as much damage as they could", each secretly assisting the open enemies of the other.

In Athens there rose into prominence, as its evil genius, the brilliant but dissolute and unscrupulous statesman, Alcibiades, a relative of Pericles. An aristocrat by birth, he became a democrat and the successor of Cleon as leader of the people. He it was who prevailed on the Athenians

to send an expedition to Sicily in response to an appeal to intervene in a local war, the real purpose being to force the Sicilian states to become dependencies of Athens. In vain Nicias, as spokesman of the conservative party, opposed the scheme. The Athenians were dazzled by the prospect of becoming possessed of wealthy Sicily so that their treasury might be enriched and trading advantages obtained. Preliminary successes were achieved against the Syracusans, but early in the campaign Lamachus, the capable and energetic Athenian general, was slain, and Nicias, who became sole commander, met with misfortunes and ultimately with disaster. The Syracusans, who received aid from the Spartans, caused the destruction of the Athenian fleet and the land army was ultimately forced to surrender, the two generals Nicias and Demosthenes being executed. Many of the native Athenian soldiers were sold as slaves. When the army and fleet were thus annihilated in Sicily, the glory of Athens perished.

Alcibiades, who had been recalled from Sicily early in the campaign on a charge of impiety, feared to stand his trial and took refuge in Sparta. Turning traitor, he revealed to the Ephors the designs of Athens and showed how it could be defeated. After the Athenians passed sentence of death on him, he took refuge in a Persian province. He ultimately returned to Athens and was taken into favour again, but he fled once more to the Persian empire and was assassinated in Phrygia.

Sparta followed the advice of Alcibiades by sending an army to Sicily to assist Syracuse and another army to invade Attica. Athens lost many of her allies, but kept up the struggle against Sparta with vigour for a time. But Sparta, strengthened by Persian assistance, ultimately prevailed. Lysander, the Spartan admiral, overcame the Athenian fleet at Ægos Potamos in 405 B.C., massacred over four

thousand prisoners, and then retook the Greek cities of Asia Minor. He then sailed for Attica. He established a blockade of Piræus while Athens was invested by a Peloponnesian army under King Agis. After a few months the Athenians were compelled, owing to the shortage of food, to surrender. The Spartans were urged by their Theban and Corinthian allies to destroy Athens, but refused, deciding that it should simply be rendered harmless. The terms of peace provided that the fortifications of Piræus and the famous "Long Walls" should be destroyed and that Athens should become subject to Sparta, restrict her navy to a dozen ships and furnish troops when Sparta had need of them. Thus ended in 404 B.C. the long-drawn-out Peloponnesian War.

The Spartan hegemony of Greece, which lasted for over thirty years, was detested as much as that of Athens had been. Indeed, it proved to be more oppressive.

In Asia Minor the Persians adopted an aggressive policy. The Greek city states in that region were ultimately given over to Artaxerxes along with Cyprus and they remained Persian until they were conquered by Alexander the Great.

Sparta was at the height of her power when she found herself involved in a struggle with the Thebans of Bœotia, which ultimately proved disastrous for her. In Thebes, the city of Pindar, the greatest lyric poet of Greece, there came into prominence two distinguished soldiers and statesmen Pelopidas and Epaminondas. What Cimon and Pericles had been to Athens, these patriots were to Thebes. Pelopidas was a brilliant soldier, but Epaminondas was the greater statesman and he served not only for Thebes alone but for the Hellenic race as a whole. Epaminondas combined the virtues of Aristides the Just with the military skill and statesmanship of Themistocles. He was born poor and remained poor all his life. His aim was to bring

peace to Greece by uniting the various states under the leadership of Thebes.

Against the Bœotian League Sparta waged a fierce struggle which came to an end when, in 371 B.C., Epaminondas won the battle of Leuctra, inflicting a severe defeat on Sparta and her allies. Thebes afterwards rose to the leading place among the Greek states. But when it lost its two great men, its prestige suddenly declined. Pelopidas was fatally wounded in 364 in a successful battle fought against Alexander of Pheræ, tyrant of Thessaly; and Epaminondas, who won a victory over Sparta and her allies, including the Athenians, at Matinea in 362 B.C., died from a spear wound.

Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great, owed much to Epaminondas. As a young man he lived in Thebes. When yet a boy he had been sent thither as a hostage, had studied Greek literature and philosophy, and had come under the influence of the cultured and upright Epaminondas. The army reforms inaugurated in Thebes were not lost upon him. He appears, indeed, to have studied to some purpose the science of war as practised by Epaminondas and Pelopidas, and in the wise statesmanship which he subsequently displayed, the influence of the example of the former can undoubtedly be traced. Philip, withal, acquired an intimate knowledge of Greek character and Greek methods of corrupting the ally of an opponent. "No city," he is said to have declared, "is impregnable if once I can get within its gates a mule-load of silver."

CHAPTER XX

Empire of Alexander the Great

Rivals for Persian Crown—Cyrus the Younger—Xenophon's Narrative—A Fatal Victory—Death of Cyrus—Retreat of Greek Mercenaries—Philip of Macedon—Army Reforms—Conquests of Philip—Subjection of Greece—Military Genius of Alexander—A Greek in Thought and Feeling—Invasion of Asia—Battles of Granicus and Issus—Siege of Tyre—Importance of Sea Power—Gaza captured—Alexander as Pharaoh of Egypt—Advance against Darius—Battle of Arbela—Alexander in Babylon, Susa and Persepolis—Pursuit and Death of Darius—Alexander's Eastern Campaigns—Invasion of India—Plans for Extension of Empire—Death of Alexander.

At the time when the glory of Athens perished and its empire went to pieces, the fate of the great empire of Persia was trembling in the balance. Darius II, as stated, died in 405 B.C., and the chief need of the time was a strong successor who would reorganize and strengthen the empire, in which the seeds of dissolution had already been sown. Revolts had broken out in the latter years of Darius and the court was a nest of intrigues. Two princes were rivals for the throne—the half-brothers Artaxerxes and Cyrus. The latter was easily the abler man. According to Xenophon, the famous Athenian general and historian, who served under him as "a soldier of fortune" he was "a man who, of all the Persians since Cyrus the elder, was the most princely and most worthy of empire". When yet a youth he had attracted attention by his mental and physical activities. He was an industrious scholar, active in the

chase and became skilled in all warlike exercises. His father appointed him satrap of Lydia, Greater Phrygia and Cappadocia and gave him command of the troops which mustered in the plain of Castolus. As a leader and administrator he became known as a man of his word, and he was consequently trusted and admired. He recognized in Athens a dangerous rival and conspired with Lysander of Sparta, to whom he sent large supplies of money, to bring about its downfall. The success of his intervention in Greek affairs culminated in Athens becoming the vassal of Sparta.

Artaxerxes II was proclaimed King of Persia before Cyrus reached the court in response to an urgent summons from his mother. He was arrested, but subsequently released and sent back to his satrapy. There he plotted to overthrow his brother, whose instability made him a tool in the hands of the nobles and ladies of the court. He raised a strong army which included a force of over 13,000 Greek mercenaries under Clearchus, the Spartan general, and set out to march against Susa. The story of the campaign is related by Xenophon, who accompanied the expedition. That historian wrote of the Persian Empire:

“An attentive observer might perceive that it was indeed strong in extent of territory and the number of its inhabitants, but if invaded by an enemy with rapid movements, weak on account of the length of the roads and the dispersion of its forces.”

Xenophon tells that Cyrus recognized the superior military power of the Greeks. “I do not take you with me as auxiliaries for want of Barbarian forces,” the historian makes him say to the mercenaries, “but because I consider you to be more efficient and more valuable than a multitude of Barbarians. . . . If you prove yourselves true and stout-hearted men, I will enable those of you who return home to

be envied by your fellow-countrymen; but I think I shall prevail upon most of you to prefer the advantages of remaining with me to those in your own country."

Artaxerxes II had raised a much larger army than Cyrus, but did not put in an appearance until the latter had reached Cunaxa, in the province of Babylon. A vivid picture of the approach of the royal army is given by Xenophon. On a hot afternoon the Greeks saw a cloud of white dust on the horizon. Then a sort of blackness spread out in a long line across the plain. In time brazen armour began to flash and spears and foot soldiers became visible. A body of cavalry in white armour appeared on the left, and as the host drew near, the Greeks could distinguish the various nationalities. There were soldiers with wicker shields, and heavily-armed Egyptians with long shields reaching to their feet. Then came more cavalry and a body of archers. Along the front line was spread out a force of charioteers. The chariots had scythes projecting from the axle-trees or from under the seats of the drivers and pointing to the earth so as to cut through any obstructions. Artaxerxes was in the centre of his great army in the midst of a force of cavalry.

The heavily-armed Greeks formed the right wing of the army of Cyrus, and as the battle opened they charged impetuously at a running pace, shouting and smiting their spears against their shields so as to alarm the horses. When the scythed chariots dashed towards them, they opened their ranks and let them pass through. The Greeks swept all before them, scattering the Persian left wing in flight. Cyrus, seeing that the Greeks were victorious, led a charge against the centre of the Persian force and routed the troops in front of the king. When he saw Artaxerxes surrounded by his guard, he, however, lost his self-control, and crying out: "I see the man," dashed forward and smote a blow which inflicted a wound through the king's breastplate.

But when Cyrus was in the act of delivering a second blow, which would have won him the Empire, he was struck by a javelin under the eye and killed. Thus in the hour of victory perished a great prince who might have changed the whole course of history. "No one", laments Xenophon, "was ever beloved by a greater number of persons, either Greeks or Barbarians."

The army of Cyrus scattered after the death of their leader, but the Greeks kept their force intact. Clearchus and other leaders were assassinated when they attended a conference to arrange for an unmolested retreat. The Persians may have thought that the Greeks were then at their mercy, but such was not the case. They elected new leaders, including Xenophon, and retreated northward past Nineveh towards the mountains of Armenia. The Persian horsemen pursued and harassed them, but the Greek force moved on until they were safely beyond their reach. In the wilds of Armenia the hill tribes came against them and the Greeks had to cut their way through the passes. Winter came on and great hardships were endured. At length, however, they reached the Black Sea, ten thousand strong, and were ultimately transported to Thrace.

This famous retreat revealed to the Greeks and others the vulnerability of the great Persian Empire. It demonstrated that a well-trained force of Europeans could, under good leadership, penetrate Asia and scatter all before it. Artaxerxes was a weak and dissolute monarch, unskilled in war, and so irreligious that many of his subjects detested him. Had there been another Cyrus to continue the struggle against him, his reign would have been brief. But although the Persian Empire had grown weak and corrupt, seventy years were to elapse before it should fall, like ripe fruit, into the hands of a European conqueror.

Philip of Macedon planned the invasion of Asia, but was

murdered when his plans were reaching maturity. He, however, it was who sowed the harvest which his son, Alexander the Great, was destined to reap. He returned home from Thebes after the murder of his elder brother, Alexander II, and when his second brother, King Perdiccas, was slain fighting against the Illyrians in 359 B.C., he was appointed regent of the kingdom, and guardian of his nephew, the child-king. He was then only twenty-three years of age, but he proved himself equal to the task of overcoming internal revolts instigated by two pretenders to the throne, and of defeating the intruding Illyrians. In 358 B.C. he had his nephew set aside and was proclaimed king.

One of Philip's first tasks was to reorganize the army. He adopted the system of Epaminondas of Thebes by training his infantry to fight in deep columns, and brought into existence the famous Macedonian phalanx of heavily armed men with long spears. His power as an autocratic king, however, made it possible for him to train a fighting force more thoroughly than any Greek leader of his time could possibly do. He raised levies regularly, and in time of peace had them thoroughly trained. Constant drill and manœuvring brought into existence a large and highly efficient army. The spears of the infantry were longer than those of the Greeks, and the points of those of the second, third, and fourth lines, projected in front of the attacking column. The soldiers were so well drilled that they could change position and re-form with rapidity and in perfect order. Philip's fine cavalry was recruited chiefly from the ranks of the nobility. For the capture of walled towns he had an auxiliary force of vigorous men trained to operate with battering rams, catapults, &c.

With his strong and efficient army, Philip gradually extended the Macedonian kingdom until he had conquered from the Thracians the gold mines of Mount Pangæus. He

then founded a new city which he named Philippi, after himself. The gold mines were thoroughly exploited and yielded an income of over £240,000 annually. Philip knew how to make use of the wealth thus placed at his disposal. His gold opened the gates of not a few cities and made friends of influential men in hostile states.

Athens became alarmed by the growing prosperity and power of Macedonia, but her day was past, and the Athenians lost one by one their Macedonian ports. In the end Philip built a strong navy, for he was determined to become the leading power at sea as well as on land.

The outbreak of the Sacred War (355-346 B.C.) gave Philip an opportunity of intervening in Greek affairs. This war was caused by the Phocians seizing land belonging to the sanctuary at Delphi. The Thebans, on behalf of the Thes-salian League, summoned the aid of Philip. After sustaining two reverses in 353 B.C., Philip, in the spring of the following year, appeared in Thessaly with a new army and won the battle of Pagasæ against the Phocians and their mercenaries. He then moved forward as far as Thermopylæ but found it defended by an Athenian army and fleet. He made no attempt to force the pass, and contented himself with possession of the fortresses of Thessaly.

Athens was roused by the great orator and statesman Demosthenes to oppose the schemes of Philip, who was rapidly extending his power both to the east and the west. The Athenian colonies of the Thracian Chersonese (Galli-poli) were being threatened, as well as the independent cities on the Propontis. In 340 B.C. Philip attempted to capture the cities of Perinthus and Byzantium (Constantinople), his aim being to close the strait to Athenian trading vessels. He was, however, thwarted in his purpose. In 339 B.C. a fresh opportunity came to Philip for further intervention in the affairs of Greece. The Locrians of Amphissa

committed the same offence as did the Phocians before them, and Philip, as a member of the league, undertook to punish them. It became apparent, however, that his real design was the conquest of Greece. The Athenians made common cause with the Thebans and Corinthians in opposing the aims of the Macedonian king. On 2nd August, 338 B.C., a great battle was fought in front of Chæroneia. The centre of the Greek army was formed by Corinthians and others, the right by the Thebans, and the left by the Athenians. Philip on the right wing was opposed to the Athenians, while his left was commanded by his son Alexander, then eighteen years of age and already known as a dashing leader of cavalry. A fierce battle was fought, entailing heavy losses on both sides. The superior cavalry of the Macedonians, however, decided the issue. The Thebans, unable to withstand young Alexander's blows, were broken and scattered and then the centre was cut up. Meanwhile the Athenians, who had caused Philip to fall back somewhat, found themselves being surrounded and took to flight. About 1000 Athenians were slain and about 2000 were made prisoners. We do not know much regarding the details of this battle, but it would appear that it was Alexander who won the victory for his father. In after life he adopted the tactics which proved so successful on this occasion. Sir J. P. Mahaffy wrote in this connexion:¹

“ I believe I was the first to call attention to the curious analogies between the tactics of Alexander and those of Cromwell. Each lived in an age when heavy cavalry were found to be superior to infantry, if kept in control, and used with skill. Hence each of them fought most of his battles by charging with his cavalry on the right wing, overthrowing the enemy's horse, and then, avoiding the temptation to pursue, charging the enemy's infantry in flank, and so deciding the issue. Meanwhile both felt strong

¹ *Greek Life and Thought.*

enough to disregard a defeat on their left wing by the enemy's horse, which was not under proper discipline, and went far away out of the battle in pursuit. . . . Alexander's 'Companions' were Cromwell's 'Ironsides'."

The Macedonian victory left Philip supreme in Greece. He made generous terms with the various states and thus softened opposition to his power. A congress held at Corinth in 338 B.C. brought about the unity of Greece under the presidency of Macedonia. Each state was left "free and autonomous", but was bound to supply troops when called upon. Some cities were garrisoned by Macedonian troops. Athens had to cede the Thracian Chersonese. But something still remained to cement the alliance of old rivals. It was provided by Philip, who aroused enthusiasm throughout Greece by proposing a common war against the Persian Empire.

When in 336 B.C. Philip was assassinated by a young Macedonian nobleman, he was in his forty-seventh year. He had some time previously sent away Olympias, Princess of Epirus, mother of Alexander, and taken as his chief wife a lady with the fatal name of Cleopatra. The friends of Olympias were involved in the plot against Philip. Alexander was deeply attached to his mother, who was a woman of strong force of character and lively temper and inclined to interfere with state affairs. In after years, when he had risen to eminence in the world's affairs, he found it necessary to curb her political ambitions, but when he received a letter from his chief minister containing complaints regarding her, he said of the writer: "He does not realize that one tear of a mother effaces a thousand letters such as this."

Alexander was scarcely twenty when he succeeded his father. Little did the Greeks realize at the outset that he would prove to be a stronger and greater overlord than

Philip. They regarded him as a vain, impetuous, and hot-headed youth who had with difficulty been kept in restraint by his father, with whom he had quarrelled frequently. He might be a dashing leader of cavalry, but was not likely to become a strong statesman. Little did they dream that young Alexander was to prove himself a great general of swift decisions and hard blows, and one too who was to introduce innovations into the science of war. It seemed as if the hour for reasserting the liberty of Greece had suddenly come when Philip was assassinated. Demosthenes cast ridicule on Alexander, and stirred up the Athenians to take steps to regain their independence. The first step taken was to seek Persian aid so as to obtain funds to build a navy and take command of the sea. Other states grew restless and some began to arm. The Ambraciots of Epirus expelled the Macedonian garrison.

Alexander was not slow to act. Having removed all rivals to his power in Macedonia, he suddenly appeared in Greece with an army of 30,000. The various states were compelled to acknowledge allegiance to him as high commander of the Hellenic League. Then Alexander proceeded to deal with the Illyrians and Thracians who were giving trouble. Having struck at his enemies, he found it necessary to return again to Greece. A false rumour that he had been killed on his northern frontier had been freely circulated. Thebes rose in revolt, and other cities were preparing to follow its example. Demosthenes urged the Athenians to declare war, but wiser counsel prevailed. Alexander came southward rapidly by forced marches, defeated the Theban army, and captured the city. He was enraged against the rebels, and called upon the Phocians and others to give judgment regarding this treachery. It was decreed that Thebes should be destroyed. This was done with ruthless thoroughness, the temples and the house of Pindar being, however, spared.

About 30,000 Thebans were sold as slaves, and the territory of the ruined city was divided among rival states. This terrible example of Alexander's vengeance completely cowed his opponents in Greece. It was fully realized that the young monarch was an even stronger and more dangerous man than his father had been.

Alexander, like his forerunner of the same name who was permitted to take part in the pan-Hellenic contests at Olympia,¹ was, although King of Macedonia, a Greek by descent, inclination, and culture. He prided himself on his descent through his mother and the Epirot kings from the Homeric hero Achilles. His mother had from his earliest years instilled into his heart the ambition to emulate the deeds of that alleged ancestor. He learned the *Iliad* by heart, and frequently drew inspiration from it during his military campaigns.

Philip had selected as the chief tutor for his great son no less distinguished a scholar than Aristotle. Alexander was only fourteen when he came under the influence of the great philosopher, and after Alexander became king, Aristotle lived at the court as a friend and adviser until the Persian campaign was opened. Then Aristotle returned to Athens, where he established his famous school in the Lyceum and composed most of his works. It is believed that Alexander owed much of his sagacity as a ruler and organizer to his famous tutor, who made him a lover of Greek literature and a Greek in mind and manners.

As a ruler, however, Alexander was more Homeric than contemporary Greeks. His conception of the kingship was in his day quite un-Hellenic. He believed in the divine right of kings at a time when the Greeks knew only one great king, the Persian monarch, who ruled over spiritless and uncultured Barbarians. Alexander's imagination was fired

¹ *Herodotus*, V, 22.

by the brilliance and luxury displayed at the court of the Persian despots. When, after the battle of Issus, he entered the tents of Darius and saw the gorgeous hangings, the golden vessels and the table set for an Oriental feast, he exclaimed with wonder and enthusiasm, "This is indeed something like royalty!"

Alexander was un-Hellenic, too, in his recreations. He regarded the habit of athletic training favoured by city-dwelling Greeks with contempt and protested that it promoted mental dullness. He preferred hunting as an exercise, commending it because it not only kept a man physically fit, but promoted courage and called for quick decisions and actions when danger threatened. He hunted the lion and the wild boar and other game, and distinguished himself as much as a sportsman as he did as a soldier.

In the spring of 334 B.C. Alexander set out on his invasion of the Persian Empire. He had previously strengthened the force which Philip had sent across the Dardanelles in 337 B.C. His army consisted of about 30,000 foot soldiers and a force of 4500 cavalry. Antipater was left in Macedonia with 12,000 foot soldiers and 1500 cavalry to keep the peace.

Alexander landed on the plain of Troy, and one of his first acts was to perform a ceremony at the tomb of Achilles. In Troy he sacrificed to the goddess Athene, and dedicated his arms to her temple. A force of the enemy was waiting for him about ten miles away, on broken ground on the opposing bank of the River Granicus. Alexander led a dashing cavalry charge across the ford, inflicting a crushing defeat on the Persians and surrounding a force of Greek mercenaries, who were mercilessly treated as rebels. The chief Persian leaders were slain and the whole of Anatolia was consequently disorganized. The ancient city states then remained to be reduced. Several cities opened their gates to him, but Miletus and Halicarnassus, the two principal

cities of Caria, set up a desperate resistance and had to be reduced. A Phœnician fleet came to the aid of Memnon, the commander of the Greek mercenaries, who had escaped from the battle of the Granicus, and after Miletus and Halicarnassus were captured, Memnon and a strong force escaped by sea. New governors were appointed in the various cities. The whole of Western Asia Minor was reduced.

In the spring of the next year Alexander moved against Cilicia. The Persian governor, Arsames, fled at his approach, and the " Cilician gates ", a rugged pass which could have been defended, like the pass of Thermopylæ, by a heroic force, was left open. Alexander swept into the Cilician plain and seized Tarsus, where he fell ill, having plunged into a cold stream after a hot and tiresome march.

The Persian monarch, Darius III (336-330 B.C.), had meantime summoned a great army which assembled at Babylon. It was reported to be about 600,000 strong, and included about 30,000 Greek soldiers of fortune.

Darius III, trusting to numbers, believed that his cavalry alone would be sufficient to overwhelm the whole Macedonian army. He seems to have been persuaded by those who found favour by flattering him, that Alexander feared to come into conflict with the great Persian army and to have paid little heed to the warning that the Macedonian king would attack the Persians at the earliest opportunity. Darius moved out from a strong position in which his army was encamped, and advancing into a mountainous country, occupied the defile of Issus, known as the " Amanic Gates ". He appears to have been unaware that Alexander was then behind him and that he was about to sever the Macedonian line of communications. When, however, the truth was realized, Darius appears to have been convinced that he had his enemy at his mercy, although, as Arrian says, he had chosen an unsuitable place for so great a force, and his

cavalry could not be of much service to him, and really afforded Alexander "a cheap and easy victory".

Alexander had moved southward towards the "Syrian gates", believing that Darius would fight on the level plains and so be able to bring his multitude of fighting men into action. He could not at first believe the news that the Persian monarch had confined his forces in a narrow space while thousands blocked the roads in the rear. A ship was dispatched towards Issus and the scouts returned to inform Alexander that the report was true, for they had seen the Persian tents. Arrian says they announced to their king that "Darius was now in his hands".

Alexander moved his army back towards Issus. When he came in sight of the enemy he immediately prepared for battle. He attacked along a front of two miles, between the sea on his left and the mountains on his right. The famous Macedonian phalanx occupied the centre, the left was under command of Parmenio, while Alexander himself commanded the right wing, which made a series of furious attacks and broke up the left wing of the Persians, and then fell on the Persian centre with disastrous results. On the left Parmenio had to yield ground, but he prevented the Persians from breaking through on the seashore so as to surround the Macedonians. Meantime the phalanx pressed forward in order. When the resolute spearmen came within range of the Persian arrows, they dashed forward at a run and drove the enemy back. They met with fierce resistance, however, from the Greek mercenaries.

When Darius perceived the Macedonian spearmen advancing boldly and nearer and nearer to him, he lost courage, and deserting his chariot, fled to the rear on horseback. The Persians soon afterwards were dismayed by the rumour that their king had been slain, and they scattered in flight. A terrible slaughter ensued. It is estimated



D 635 Alexander

Darius

THE BATTLE OF ISSUS

From a mosaic picture from Pompeii, now in the Naples Museum. The mosaic dates from the beginning of the Christian era, and is probably based on an earlier Greek painting

that about 30,000 Persians and their allies were slain.

The camp and baggage of the Persian army were captured. In the tents of Darius were found his mother, his wife, his sister, his infant son, and two daughters. A number of the wives of the Persian nobles were also taken. The money captured is estimated at about £700,000. Among the documents that fell into the hands of Alexander were letters from rebels in the Greek states. Darius had done his utmost by means of bribes to break up the Hellenic League.

Alexander resisted the temptation to pursue Darius into the heart of Asia. The Persians still held command of the sea, and could transfer the war to Greece where Alexander was feared rather than loved. Arrian tells that, addressing a council of friends, Alexander stated that he would not advance against Darius until Phœnicia, Cyprus, and Egypt were subdued and he had won absolute sovereignty of the sea. "When," he declared, "Egypt is added to our empire, we shall then cease to be anxious about the state of Greece or our own domestic affairs. And," he added, "as we may undertake the Babylonian expedition with more security at home, so we may attempt it with much more glory and honour when the Persians are removed from the sea coasts and chased out of all the countries on this side of the Euphrates."

The Phœnician cities of Sidon, Byblus and Aradus, readily submitted to Alexander. But Tyre, which had been semi-independent under the Persians, was willing to arrange a treaty of alliance, but refused to allow the Macedonians to enter through its gates. Its king was at the time commanding a squadron of Tyrian vessels in the Persian fleet which operated without resistance in the Ægean Sea. Alexander was enraged, and resolved to besiege and capture the city, which at the time occupied a small island separated from the mainland by a strait 700 yards in breadth. The

siege occupied seven months. Alexander set his engineers to construct a mole between the islet and the mainland so that his battering rams might be brought against the walls of the town. The work was continually interrupted, for Alexander had no war vessels to beat off the attacks of those of the Tyrians. Although the partly-constructed mole was once almost entirely destroyed by the defenders, Alexander set his engineers again to construct a new and stronger one, but he recognized that Tyre would never be reduced until he became possessed of a navy. Accordingly he proceeded to Sidon and there found eighty vessels, the squadrons of Sidon, Aradus and Byblus, which had left the Persian navy. The commanders willingly accepted service under his flag. Other vessels from Rhodes, Lycia, &c., were soon afterwards added to his fleet. Then came of their own accord the princes of Cyprus, who had heard of the Persian defeat at Issus, and placed at the disposal of Alexander a fleet of 120 vessels. The Macedonian king then had at command a fleet of about 224 war-ships with which to win the essential command of the sea. Tyre fell soon afterwards, and all the cities in Palestine, with the exception of Gaza, opened their gates to Alexander.

Gaza commanded the road to Egypt, and its governor remained faithful to Darius. He believed the city was impregnable, and had it provisioned for a long siege. Alexander ordered a rampart to be constructed round the south wall, so that his battering rams might clear a way for his soldiers. The defenders made a furious sally from the city, set fire to the engines and drove the besiegers from the rampart. Alexander, with characteristic resolution, had the rampart extended round the city, and the battering rams used at Tyre brought southward by sea. He also set miners to work beneath the foundations of the city walls. The defenders fought bravely, beating back three attacks with

vigour and determination, but the Macedonians succeeded in their fourth attack, and Gaza was captured.

Alexander then continued his march towards Egypt. On reaching Pelusium he found his navy waiting for him. The Persian governor submitted without the least show of resistance, and Alexander ordered his ships to sail up the Nile, while he and his force marched upon Heliopolis, which at once capitulated. Then he crossed the Nile to Memphis, where he was welcomed. He sacrificed to the Egyptian gods, but especially to Apis.

From Memphis, Alexander returned to the sea coast. Curtius (Book IV, Chap. 8) tells that "on his return from Amon's temple, viewing the island Pharos, he admired the pleasantness thereof, and resolved to build a city on it; but, upon second thoughts, he found it not large enough to contain one worthy of the greatness of its founder; whereupon he marked out a place for a city where Alexandria now stands". Plutarch tells that Alexander chanced one night to see "a strange vision. A grey-headed old man of venerable aspect (Homer) seemed to stand by him and commanded him to build the city he had intended." As has been shown in an earlier chapter, the Egyptians of the Middle Kingdom, if not of the Old Kingdom, had at Pharos a great harbour which has been identified with "the safe haven" referred to by Homer. Tyre having been destroyed, Alexander reconstructed this "safe haven" as a base for his Mediterranean fleet, with which he obtained command of the sea.

Before leaving Egypt, the conqueror visited the Oracle of Amon on the oasis of Siwah, and was hailed as the god's son, and therefore the legitimate Pharaoh. A native Egyptian was appointed as governor of Lower and Upper Egypt, while Greek governors were placed over Libya and Arabia.

Early in 331 B.C. Alexander left Memphis and moved northward through Palestine towards Syria. His fleet

awaited him at Tyre, where he honoured Heracles-Melkarth at a festival, and held games which were attended by Greek athletes. Before leaving the half-ruined city, he dispatched his fleet to the Peloponnese, where Antipater was engaged in war with the Spartans, whose ruler had been bribed by Persian gold to rise in revolt against his Macedonian overlord. The Athenian soldiers of fortune who had been taken prisoners at the battle of the Granicus were set at liberty and conveyed to their city.

Darius III, having failed to make peace with Alexander, had had two years in which to raise another great army. On hearing of Alexander's advance, he moved out of Babylon and went northward into the ancient country of the Assyrians, selecting an advantageous position on the far side of the Great Zab near Arbela, where the country—the plain of Gangamela—was wide and level and suitable for the operations of the large army under his command.

The cavalry of the Persians attempted to prevent Alexander's advance-guard throwing two bridges across the Euphrates at Thapsacus, but were driven off when the main force began to arrive. From Thapsacus Alexander moved northward towards the southern slopes of the Armenian mountains and then turned eastward towards the Tigris. He chose this route in order to avoid the great heat and because fodder and other provisions could be obtained in abundance. No resistance was shown when he reached the Tigris nor during the five days occupied in crossing that rapid river.

Alexander rested his troops, and during this interval there was an eclipse of the moon. The conqueror was assured that the omen was a favourable one, portending happiness and success for him. He then set out to attack the Persians. After four days' march, he came into touch with forces of cavalry sent out to reconnoitre, and soon afterwards

received from spies information regarding the size and position of the army of Darius.

On the evening of 30th September, 331 B.C., Alexander was in sight of the Persians and, riding out with his Light Horse, surveyed the field where the battle was to be fought. Some of his captains favoured a night attack, but Alexander refused to undertake such a venture in a country with which the enemy were thoroughly acquainted, while the Macedonians were ignorant of it.

The Persians, fearing such an attack, stood under arms all night. "Surely", says Arrian, "their long and tedious watching in heavy armour and the fear which usually possesses men's minds before a great danger, contributed not a little to their overthrow." Alexander's army slept while sentinels kept watch.

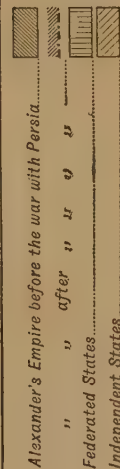
The Persian army, which included Median, Bactrian, and Indian cavalry and Greek mercenaries, outnumbered by ten to one Alexander's force of 40,000 infantry and 7000 cavalry. Indeed, it was evident from the outset that the invaders would be outflanked on both wings. But Alexander, trusting to the superior fighting power of his comparatively small army, decided to attack the Persian centre where Darius was surrounded by his bodyguard. He formed his troops in a hollow square, the Macedonian phalanx being in the front, and the sides protected by cavalry. When the front line became engaged the enemy cavalry attacked fiercely on both wings. The Macedonian left wing suffered greatly, Indian and Bactrian cavalry broke through and penetrated as far as the Macedonian baggage, but the rear-guard of the first phalanx fell upon them and forced them to take flight. For a time the issue of the battle seemed uncertain, but Alexander, with his bodyguard and the right brigades of the phalanx, broke through the Persian centre and so terrorized Darius that he took to flight, believing all was

lost. The centre broke and fled, but Alexander, having ascertained that his left wing was in danger, refrained from pursuit, and turned to attack the Persian right wing, which was fighting fiercely. The Thessalian horse attacked with vigour, and when Alexander came up the enemy broke and fled. The pursuit of Darius was then resumed until darkness came on. After resting his auxiliary troops Alexander conducted a night advance towards Arbela, hoping to find Darius there. He arrived next morning, but found that the Persian monarch had fled towards Ecbatana, leaving behind all his treasure, which was seized.

Alexander gave up the pursuit of Darius and the small force which accompanied him, and marched southward to Babylon. On his approach the Babylonians opened their gates and large numbers accompanied the priests and the chief men to welcome the conqueror. Alexander acted as he had done in Memphis. He sacrificed to the chief god of the city and directed that the temples which Xerxes had destroyed should be rebuilt, especially the temple of Bel (Marduk). It seemed to the oppressed Babylonians as if a new era had dawned, and that the glory of their ancient city was to be restored.

From Babylon Alexander proceeded to Susa. On the way he met a son of the governor of that city, who carried a message stating that Susa would submit to him and that all the royal treasure was safe. The treasure amounted to 50,000 talents of silver (the equivalent of about twelve million pounds sterling). Among other things found at Susa were the brazen statues of Harmodius and Aristogiton which Xerxes had carried off from Athens. These were sent back to Greece, and served further to popularize Alexander among the Athenians. While at Susa Alexander received 8000 Macedonian reinforcements.

The next advance was made against Persepolis, the real



The
EMPIRE of ALEXANDER

English Miles

English miles
0 100 200 400 600 800

capital of the Persian Empire, in which the Persian kings were crowned and where they were buried. It lay to the south-east of Susa, across a mountainous and difficult country occupied by the Uxii, who were accustomed to receive tribute from the Persian monarchs when they entered their pass. Alexander, led by guides from Susa, avoided the pass and, entering the country by difficult routes under cover of darkness, advanced against the force of Uxii holding the pass, from the rear, with the result that the enemy was forced to surrender. Another pass had to be seized, and Alexander divided his army. His general advanced towards the enemy with one part, while he with the other, consisting of light troops, took an alternative route. The enemy were attacked simultaneously in front and in rear and speedily overcome. Thus, having forced the passage from the "Persian Gates", Alexander advanced on Persepolis, which fell without resistance. Alexander set fire to the palace in revenge for the injuries done to Greece by Xerxes, the destroyer of Athens. Arrian refers to this as a "political action", adding that it was no revenge at all upon the Persians. Persepolis was sacked as Athens had been, and the Persian Empire then ceased to exist.

In the spring of 330 B.C. Alexander went northwards towards Ecbatana, where Darius had sought refuge. But Darius fled several days before the conqueror reached the ancient Median capital. While on his way he heard of the revolt of the satraps, Bessus of Bactria and Barsætēs of Arachosia, who had made Darius their prisoner. Artabazus the Persian, his sons, and the Greek mercenaries who had remained faithful to the king had withdrawn to the mountains.

Alexander resolved to push forward with all possible speed, and with 500 horsemen he covered 256 miles in six days. His sudden and unexpected appearance demoralized

the enemy. The greater part of the rebel army fled; the few who resisted were cut down. Bessus and his companions assassinated Darius before seeking escape in flight. Alexander found him lying in his chariot with darts sticking in his body, and is said to have shown much sorrow and, taking off his own cloak, covered the body with it. He afterwards had Darius laid in state and buried with pomp and ceremony among the royal tombs.

The pursuit of Bessus was continued across the desert of Bactria, and when he was at length captured, having been surrendered by the commander of the cavalry of Sogdiana, he was first scourged and afterwards crucified. But from 329 till 327 B.C. Alexander had to wage war in Sogdiana before he could definitely fix the River Jaxartes as the boundary of his empire. In a mountain stronghold which he captured he found the beautiful lady Roxana, daughter of Oxyartes, whom he married soon afterwards.

In 327 B.C. Alexander set out to conquer the Punjab so as to increase trading facilities with India. He marched southward through Afghanistan along the Kabul River with an army of 100,000 tried warriors, and, having reduced the mountain tribes, sent one part of his army through the Khaibar Pass, he himself leading a force into Kafistan and Chitral, which after fierce fighting were subdued. In the spring of 326 B.C. he effected a junction with the other part of his army and crossed the Indus. A battle was fought against Porus, the Puru prince, on the eastern bank of the Hydaspes. Alexander was victorious, but he wisely arranged a treaty of peace and Porus became his ally, with his former kingdom greatly extended. Other battles had to be fought before the conquest of the Punjab was completed. A fleet was built and Alexander sailed down the Indus to the open sea. Great sufferings had been endured during the arduous campaign, but the return march through Baluchistan entailed

more, while heavy losses were sustained crossing the desert before Persia was reached. The fleet, under Nearchus, sailed round to the Persian Gulf and thus explored a sea-route for the development of trade.

All the conquered territory was placed under the control of Greek governors, and held by garrisons, the Magadha kingdom of Porus acknowledging Alexander as its overlord; new towns were established in India and became centres of commerce.

Alexander then reigned over a great empire extending from the Punjab in the east to Greece in the west, and from Armenia and Asia Minor in the north southward to Egypt. In the last year of his life he was planning a campaign in Arabia and another in Italy. Rome was at the time involved in the Samnite wars, and had he lived he might have turned the tide of history.

Alexander had resolved to make Babylon the capital of his world empire, and to weld East and West into one. He assumed the attire and manners of an Eastern despot. To his Asiatic subjects he was a god: his courtiers prostrated themselves before him, kissing the dust, as he sat enthroned in state. He established a harem, and married, in addition to Roxana, the Princess Statira, eldest daughter of Darius III, and Parysates, daughter of Ochus, his predecessor. He thus legalized his succession to the throne of Persia and secured the loyalty of his subjects, for whose welfare he laboured in many ways. He also encouraged his officers and men to marry Persian women, it being his aim to secure the amalgamation of conquerors and conquered. And, although he offended the Macedonian veterans by so doing, he raised an army of 30,000 Persians who were trained in the Macedonian fashion. With his great army of allies he might, had he lived a few years longer than he did, have conquered the whole of Europe.

His progress in Asia had been followed with keen interest by other Europeans besides the Greeks and Macedonians. After he entered Babylon envoys reached him from, among others, the Lybians, European Scythians, the Celts and the Iberians. According to Ptolemy, son of Lagus, the Celts came from the Adriatic, and made a treaty of goodwill and "guest friendship" with Alexander. Arrian says these Celts were of large stature, and had no small opinion of themselves. Alexander hoped that his fame had reached not only the Celts but had gone far beyond them. The Carthaginians, who also sent an embassy, had reason to expect that they would have further dealings with Alexander. After Tyre fell he claimed Carthage as its colony and had he lived he might have made good his claim and come into conflict with Rome.

In June, 323, when only thirty-two, and having reigned for twelve years since his father's murder, Alexander the Great died in Babylon. He had contracted malaria while surveying the Euphrates delta, busy with plans for the future. His constitution had been weakened by the sufferings endured in India and Baluchistan, and he foolishly attempted to shake off the disease by heavy drinking.

CHAPTER XXI

Empires of the Seleucidæ and Ptolemies

Division of Alexander's Empire—Macedonian Rulers at War—Seleucus an Asian Emperor—Antiochus the Great—The Friend of Hannibal—Attempt to conquer Greece—Roman Victories—Seleucid Invasion of Egypt—Rome saves Alexandria—End of Empire of the Seleucidæ—The Egyptianized Ptolemies—Alexandria the Capital—A Centre of Commerce and Culture—Ptolemy of the Rosetta Stone—Ptolemaic Temple Art—Alexandria a Hotbed of Sedition—Rome in Egypt—Sack of Jerusalem by Seleucid King—The Maccabean Rebellion—Judah and Rome—King Herod.

The great empire of Alexander was, after his death, divided between rival generals; Ptolemy governed Egypt, Antipater held sway in Macedonia and Greece, Lysimachus in Thrace, Leonnatus in Hellespontine Phrygia, Antigonus in Greater Phrygia and Eumenes in Cappadocia. A nominal allegiance was at first shown to the child son of Alexander by Roxana, but ultimately this heir to a vast empire was murdered at the command of Cassander, son of Antipater. Alexander's mother and his widow Roxana afterwards shared a similar fate.

Cassander displaced his brother, Polysperchon, who was his father's heir, and married Alexander's half-sister, Thessalonica, whose name he conferred upon Therma (modern Salonica), which he greatly enlarged and strengthened. He had no thought of emulating or succeeding Alex-

ALEXANDER'S SUCCESSORS AT VARIANCE 241

ander as a world-emperor. His ambition was to rule over Macedonia and Greece as an independent monarch.

Antigonus of Greater Phrygia rose into prominence when war broke out among the rivals for supremacy in Asia. He, however, acted in such a despotic manner, aspiring to be the successor of Alexander in the East, that



The heavy black line shows the Boundary of Alexander's Empire

an alliance was formed against him by Ptolemy of Egypt, Lysimachus of Thrace, Cassander of Macedonia, and Seleucus, who had become governor of the province of Susiana. From 315 till 301 B.C. the various provinces were plunged in war. Antigonus was ultimately defeated and killed at the battle of Ipsus. The victory was won by Seleucus and Lysimachus, who divided the possessions of Antigonus between them, the former taking Syria and Greater Phrygia and the latter Caria, Lydia, Ionia and Hellespontine Phrygia. Ptolemy of Egypt had evacuated Syria, believing a false report that Antigonus had been

successful, and therefore lost that country for which he had striven for long. Twenty years later, Lysimachus, having waged war with Seleucus, was slain in battle and Seleucus seized his Anatolian dominions.

Seleucus, who was a Macedonian nobleman, had distinguished himself during Alexander's lifetime in the Indian campaign. After becoming governor of Susiana, he conquered Media (which was being governed by Nicanor, who had been appointed by Antigonus), and forced Bactria to submit to him. Then he invaded India, where Chandragupta had founded a native empire which included the Magadha kingdom. He formed an alliance with Chandragupta and it was subsequently confirmed by a marriage alliance. A Greek ambassador went to the Indian court and a Hindu ambassador to the court of Seleucus.

It was after Seleucus, who had assumed the crown in 306 B.C., had secured his power in the East that he felt himself strong enough to deal with Antigonus. No contemporary chronicle celebrated his fame, and we consequently know little about him. But he was undoubtedly a great general and an able ruler. Before he died he held sway over the greater part of Alexander's empire, his only serious rival being Ptolemy of Egypt. These two monarchs founded Dynasties which endured until Rome became supreme.

Seleucus founded seventy-five towns. These included Seleucia on the Tigris, which took the place of dying Babylon as a great commercial centre; Antioch on the Orontes, which he made his capital after leaving Babylon; Laodicea in the Lebanon; Apamea on the Orontes. The new cities were governed like Greek towns, each having a senate and popular assembly, and they became centres from which Hellenic trade and culture spread far and wide.

In his old age Seleucus appointed Antiochus regent of Asia, having resolved to retire to his native Macedonia

and end his days in peace. He reached Europe (281 B.C.) only to fall to the dagger of the treacherous Ceraunos, who seized upon Macedonia and Thrace.

The descendants of Seleucus I were involved in wars to keep open the trade routes. A few years after the death of the founder of the Dynasty, the Gauls invaded Asia Minor from Thrace, and, after severe contests, were confined within the limits of the area which came to be known as Galatia. Cappadocia and Armenia were independent and their princes not subjects but more or less friendly allies. Revolts broke out in Bactria and Media. Seleucus Callincus (246-226 B.C.) left a dwindled empire, but his second son, Antiochus III (223-187 B.C.), who was surnamed Megas (the Great) proved himself an able general and statesman. He recovered much of the empire of the first Seleucidæ; but the future lay with Rome. Antiochus showed friendship to Hannibal and he set out with a small army to conquer Greece, only to be disastrously defeated by the Romans (191 B.C.). His Syrian fleet was twice worsted at sea by Roman admirals. In 190 B.C. he was defeated again and had to abandon to Rome the best part of Asia Minor, from the Taurus to the Ægean, and to pay a heavy indemnity, which was spread over twelve years. His son Antiochus IV invaded Egypt, which seemed ripe for conquest; but when he began to besiege Alexandria he was ordered by the Roman senate to quit Egypt, and he could do no other than obey. Ultimately the empire of the Seleucidæ went to pieces—the Parthians became masters of Media and Babylonia in 138 B.C. Only Syria was left, and the shadow of Rome had already fallen on that region. In 64 B.C. Pompey brought the Seleucid power to an end in Syria. The cultural influence of Hellenism, however, survived in the Greek cities; but although the Greek trader may have caused the fame of "Fu-lin" (Syria) to reach China, and Greek commerce and culture may have

left their impress on India, the East remained the East and the West the West; the twain met, but never mingled. In the past the priest and not the soldier made the most enduring conquests in the East. Religious systems have flourished where political systems have failed. Neither Greece nor Rome opened the gates of a Paradise in Asia, and it is for a Paradise that the East, from the dawn of its history, has made search with its whole heart and mind.

In Egypt Macedonian rule existed for three centuries, and that mainly because the Ptolemies were Egyptianized, and ruled as Pharaohs in accordance with Nilotic modes of thought and traditions. Ptolemy, son of Lagus, began to rule in 323 B.C., but it was not until 304 B.C. that he assumed the ancient double crown. He had recovered part of the ancient Egyptian Empire in Palestine and Syria, but in 301 B.C., when he failed to advance against Antigonus, Syria went to Seleucus, as has been stated. Ptolemy, however, retained his hold on Cyprus, having built a strong fleet, recognizing shrewdly that the prestige of Egypt depended greatly on sea power.

Although Alexander the Great may have planned the building of Alexandria, marking out the foundations of the walls, as Greek writers state, and fixing the sites of the temples and other buildings, it was Ptolemy Soter who appears to have undertaken the work, which was continued by his son and successor. Ptolemy must have greatly increased his prestige in Egypt by securing the body of Alexander, for which a great tomb was constructed at Alexandria. When he became the Pharaoh, he followed Alexander's example in having himself acknowledged with ceremony as the "two-horned" son of Amon-re. The ancient sun-god was, however, displaced by the popular Osiris, who had acquired solar attributes as Osiris-Apis or Serapis, and he acquired also Greek attributes. The chief sanctuary of

Serapis was at Alexandria, which became the capital of Egypt. Naucratis, the Greek city state, was bereft of its privileges and sank into insignificance as Alexandria grew and flourished as a centre of commerce and learning. Greek garrisons were settled at Ptolemais in Upper Egypt and at Crocodilopolis in the Fayum, which was called Arsinoë after the sister and wife of the second Ptolemy, who revived the Egyptian custom of sister marriage.

To the fifth Ptolemy, who was yet a lad when he came to the throne, we owe, although indirectly, much of our knowledge of ancient Egyptian history and religion. A decree of the priests, issued in 195 B.C. in his honour was inscribed in hieroglyphics, demotic characters and Greek on a block of black basalt which was discovered by the French in 1799, and is known as the "Rosetta stone". It was ceded to the British in 1801 as a war trophy, and is preserved in the British Museum. The trilingual text ultimately provided the key to the ancient Egyptian language.

It was during the Ptolemaic period that the beautiful little temple at Philæ, which is now almost wholly submerged when the Aswan dam is flooded to the full, was erected on an island of the Nile. This and other gems of architecture at Edfu, Esne, and Dendera are worthy of comparison with the Theban relics, because though less massive and grand, they display fine feeling and exquisite craftsmanship. The temple has reliefs in which the Ptolemies figure in company of the ancient gods are worthy of comparison with those of the Empire period.

The latter half of the Ptolemaic period was much disturbed. Palace intrigues and revolutionary movements, now of native and now of Greek origin, kept the capital in a state of unrest. Vivid glimpses of the life of the times are afforded by the papyri discovered at Oxyrhynchus by Messrs. Grenfell and Hunt. A young citizen of Alexandria who was

evidently, like his friends, suspected of sedition, wrote to his brother:

“ I learned from some fishermen that Secundus’s house has been searched and my house has been searched. I shall therefore be obliged if you will write me an answer on this matter so that I may myself present a petition to the Prefect. . . . Let me hear about our bald friend, how his hair is growing on the top; be sure and do so.”

But Alexandria was not merely a hotbed of sedition. It was a centre of learning. The Ptolemies brought scholars to their capital, in which there grew up a famous library. Euclid, the Greek mathematician, whose “ Elements of Geometry ” in thirteen books still survives, lived at Alexandria during the reign of the first Ptolemy and is known to have visited the Egyptian temple college at Heliopolis in company of his friend Eudoxus. Theocritus, the Greek poet, a native of Syracuse, lived in Alexandria during the same reign. Callimachus, the Greek poet, a native of Cyrene, whose work survives only in fragments, was appointed by the second Ptolemy, surnamed Philadelphus, librarian of the Alexandrine Museum. This Ptolemy was also the patron and friend of Aratus, the astronomer poet, who composed a poetic version of a prose astronomical work by Eudoxus, from which St. Paul, when preaching at Athens, made a quotation in the verse (*Acts*, xvii, 28).

“ For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, ‘ For we are also his offspring ’.”

Eratosthenes, the astronomer, a native of Cyrene, was, like Callimachus, librarian at Alexandria, and he died in the year after the trilingual inscription was cut on the famous Rosetta stone. As was the case with Athens during its Empire period, the great wealth accumulated in Alex-

andria fostered art and learning, literature and science. Wealth ensures the leisure necessary for the promotion of culture in all its branches. The Alexandrian merchants had trading connexions with Greece, Asia Minor, and Syria, and even with distant India. Egypt's rich harvests, on which the ancient splendour of the Pharaohs was founded, made it the granary of the ancient Mediterranean world.

The latter half of the Ptolemaic regime was one of constant unrest and growing weakness. After the Roman senate, in 168 B.C., ordered the Seleucid monarch, Antiochus IV, to quit Egypt, the influence of Rome in Egypt became more and more pronounced. Claimants to the throne of Egypt found refuge and support in Rome. Lathyros of Cyprus, however, in 88 B.C., seized the Egyptian throne, when it became vacant, without the consent of Rome and at a time when Rome was involved in troubles of its own. It was he who stamped out a rising in Upper Egypt and destroyed Thebes so thoroughly in 83 B.C. That great city was never rebuilt.

After Lathyros died, the succession lapsed back to the female line and there were a number of weak rulers. Ptolemies and Cleopatras ruled and schemed and quarrelled. The famous Cleopatra was the VIIth of her name. She ruled for a time with her brother, Ptolemy XV, and when he disappeared, Ptolemy XVI, her son by Julius Cæsar, became king. Both died in 30 B.C., when the land of Egypt became the property of the Roman Emperor.

It was during the period when Rome regarded Egypt as being within its sphere of influence, and ordered the Seleucid king to evacuate it, that Jerusalem was sacked and destroyed. Judah had recognized the supremacy of Syria, and Antiochus III was welcomed and honoured in Jerusalem. But after that monarch was defeated by Rome, and compelled to undertake the payment of a heavy indemnity, Jerusalem grew

restless under the burden of the taxation imposed. A strong political party, instigated, no doubt, by the wealthy Jews of Alexandria, favoured Egypt and looked to Rome with hope of release. But when in 168 B.C. Antiochus IV evacuated Egypt, in obedience to and through fear of Rome, he wreaked his vengeance on Jerusalem, destroying its walls and slaying and scattering its inhabitants, some of whom found refuge in Alexandria. Nor did his persecution of the Jews end with the destruction of Jerusalem. He endeavoured, as did Nebuchadrezzar before him, to break up the Jewish nation and make it impossible for the Jews ever to recover a vestige of political power. But the religious bond of Judaism inspired a determined resistance against the tyrant. The Hellenizing policy of the Seleucid power in Syria brought into prominence as a leader the priest Mattathias who, with a growing force of the faithful, raised revolt among the mountains. After his death Judas Maccabeus, his son, won a victory over a Syrian army sent against the Jews. Antiochus IV died in 164 B.C. while engaged in a campaign against the Parthians, and the regent Lysias, during the minority of Antiochus V, continued the war. His army was defeated in 166 B.C. and again in 165 B.C., and Judas Maccabeus recovered Jerusalem. A Syrian garrison still held out in the Akra, however. Lysias, accompanied by Antiochus V, advanced against Jerusalem and defeated Judas Maccabeus in the vicinity of Beth Zachariah. Jerusalem was besieged, but in the end terms of peace were arranged. After Lysias and Antiochus V were deposed, Demetrius I (162-150 B.C.) came to the throne. He appointed Alcinus as high priest, but the Maccabeans continued to resist. In 161 B.C. Judas won a victory, but in the next battle he was defeated and slain. His brother Jonathan then became the leader of the small band of the faithful who resisted the Hellenizing process. He was in turn succeeded by his brother Simon

Maccabeus, who carried the national cause to a successful issue. Jerusalem was rebuilt and the dynasty of ruling priests was firmly established. Simon's reign dates from 142 B.C. His son and successor, John Hyrcanus, secured his power by arranging an alliance with Rome and recovered a great part of the ancient kingdom of David. His son Jannæus extended the Jewish dominion and died in 78 B.C. Fifteen years later, after much internal dissension, during which the two sons of Jannæus, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, struggled for supremacy, Pompey intervened. He had stamped out the last vestige of Seleucid rule in Syria, and he overcame Aristobulus. The native Dynasty was then brought to an end. Hyrcanus was allowed to continue as high priest, and the Jews were given religious freedom. Judæa became a Roman province, and Julius Cæsar appointed as procurator Antipater, who had become a convert to Judaism and was governor of Idumæa under Jannæus. Antipater appointed his second son, Herod, as governor of Galilee. It was owing to the influence of Antony that Herod ultimately became King of Judæa. He rebuilt Jerusalem and Samaria, as well as a number of fortresses throughout his kingdom.

In the last year of Herod's reign Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

Ancient Indian Chronology

ANCIENT INDIAN CHRONOLOGY

- Sumerian influence in India, *c.* 2500 B.C.
- Aryan invasions in progress, *c.* 1200 B.C.
- Brahmans and nobles struggling for supremacy, *c.* 800 B.C.
- Death of Buddha, 480 B.C.
- Kingdom of Magadha extending, 450 B.C.
- Alexander the Great reaches the Indus, 327 B.C.
- Alexander defeats King Porus, 326 B.C.
- Alexander leaves India, 325 B.C.
- Chandragupta's revolt against Greeks, 320 B.C.
- Chandragupta conquers Magadha, 315 B.C.
- Seleucus makes treaty with Chandragupta, 305 B.C.
- Death of Chandragupta, 291 B.C.
- Asoka becomes King of Magadha, 263 B.C.
- Rapid spread of Buddhism, 256 B.C.
- Dynasty of Maurya falls, 180 B.C.
- Scythians invading India, *c.* 125 B.C.
- King Vikramaditya struggling against Scythians, 57 B.C.
- Greek authority lingers in Punjab till 25 B.C.

CHAPTER XXII

The Early Indian Empire

Alexander and Porus—Puru Tribe of Aryan Origin—Gods of Mitanni and Aryo-India—Burial Customs of Vedic Age—Non-Aryan Peoples of Eastern India—Dravidians and pre-Dravidians—Ancient Mariners—Sacred Country of Brahmans—History in the Epics—Caste System—Priests versus Military Aristocrats—Buddha opposed to Caste System—A Rebel who became an Emperor—The Mauriyan Dynasty—Asoka, Monk and Emperor—Buddhist Missionaries—Shunga Dynasty—Scythians in India.

It has been told that when Alexander the Great invaded India he defeated Porus, in whose army there were chariots and cavalry and war elephants. Plutarch says that when Porus was taken prisoner the conqueror asked how he desired to be treated. "Like a king," Porus answered. "And have you nothing else to request?" inquired Alexander. "No," he replied, "everything is comprehended in the word king."

The military state of Porus had evidently been modelled on that of Persia, and its weakness lay in its centralization. When the standing army of the monarch was overthrown, his kingdom at once fell like ripe fruit into the hands of the conqueror.

Alexander learned at the time that a more powerful state than that of Porus lay farther eastward. This was the kingdom of Magadha in the plain of the Ganges.

The name of Porus connects him with the ancient King, Puru and the people of that name referred to in the early Sanskrit poems of the *Rigveda*, who were associated with

the Sarasvati. The Puru tribe was ultimately merged in the Kuru tribe, but a portion retained their identity in the west. These Purus appear to have been earlier settlers in India than the Kurus. Both peoples were of Aryan speech.

Much has been written regarding these Aryans, or, as some prefer to call them, the Indo-Europeans. Some have inclined to date the origin of their Vedic culture as far back as 4500 B.C., but the earliest inscription which throws light on the problem has been dated about 1400 B.C. It was discovered by Professor Hugo Winckler at Bogház-Keui, in Asia Minor, in 1907, and gives the names of the following deities:

mi-it-ra, uru-w-na, in-da-ra, na-să-at-ti-ia.

These can be identified with the Aryo-Indian gods Mitra, Varuna, Indra, and Nāsatya; the forms, however, are Persian rather than Indian, but earlier than Avestan Persian. Apparently a branch of the so-called Aryan people had settled in Northern Mesopotamia before another branch had entered India. The invasion of the Punjab has been fixed by Professor A. A. Macdonell as about 1200 B.C.¹ and the discovery of the Bogház-Keui inscription has not caused him to alter that view.

It would appear that there were several intrusions of Aryan peoples into the Punjab. They were not, however, all at the same stage of culture, nor was there complete uniformity in religious beliefs and customs. The fire god Agni, whose worship subsequently became general, is associated in the *Rigveda*, the earliest collection of Sanskrit religious hymns, with a people called the Bharata, for he is referred to as "Agni of the Bharatas". His worshippers cremated their dead, but those who regarded Varuna as their chief god buried their dead in graves. "Agni-dagdha"

¹ *History of Sanskrit Literature*, pp. 11-12.

("burnt with fire") is the Rigvedic epithet for cremation, while "an-agnidagdhāh" means "not burnt with fire", and there are references to Varuna's "house of clay". Other funerary customs are "casting out" (*paroptāh*), and "exposure" (*uddhitāh*).¹

The people of the west erected over their dead, or the bones of those who had been cremated, four-cornered mounds "facing the south-east, on ground inclined to the north", while "the easterners made their mounds round" and lined the graves with brick or stone.² Prominent among these easterners were the Magadha who are despised by the Aryans in their Vedic literature. They were a musical people, and ultimately "Magadha" signified a minstrel. The tribes of the Magadha country, the Kasis, Kosalas, and Videhas, were hostile to the Kurus and their allies, and had evidently come under the influence of a different culture. It is possible, therefore, that the aboriginal stock of the Magadha country was non-Aryan, but it was not necessarily on that account at a low stage of civilization. The Aryans, it must be confessed, have been idealized by not a few writers. Scholars of a past generation represented them as a highly cultured people who entered India when it was in a state of savagery, and gradually conquered the great northern plain and then spread Aryan culture over the rest of India. There appear, however, to have been early settlements in India of a people, or peoples, whose civilization was not necessarily lower, but, in some respects, may have been higher than that of the Aryan tribes. Certain of these peoples appear to have been seafarers, agriculturists, and miners. They are generally classed as Dravidians, but "Dravidian" is a term really applied to a group of non-Aryan languages and has not a precise racial significance. Of late some have introduced the term "pre-Dravidian"

¹ Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, Vol. I, p. 8.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. I, 257, and II, 397.

to distinguish the less cultured non-Aryan Indians from those who had acquired a higher civilization in early times.

When the so-called Dravidians came into contact with the Indo-Aryans they possessed an alphabet and their learned men wrote on palm leaves with a stylus. Petty kings ruled over the tribes, and apparently there were priest kings. The god was the *Ko* (king), and was worshipped in a temple. As the coastal peoples had not only boats, but also decked ships, it would appear that Dravidian culture was originally imported into India by colonies of seafarers. Indian Ocean shells found in Middle Kingdom graves in Ancient Egypt indicate that the mariners who ventured on the Red Sea made longer voyages than used to be supposed. We know little or nothing regarding the activities of seafarers who dwelt on the shores of the Persian Gulf. The fact, however, that Solomon's ships visited Pahang, the home of the peacock, in the tenth century B.C., indicates that long before his time seafarers had explored the Indian Ocean and sailed beyond India and Ceylon.¹ The Egyptian type of vessel, with high prow and stern, and characteristic oculi, was adopted far and wide in ancient times. Interesting survivals can still be traced on the coasts of India and Ceylon.²

Traces of contact with Sumerian civilization have come to light at Mohenjo Daro in the Larkana district of Sind and at Harappa on the Ravi river. Under certain buildings, some of which are not older than the third century B.C., were found relics of a civilization at least a thousand years older than the earliest Aryan invasion. These include inscribed seals of similar shape to the square stamp seals of

¹ Doubt is thrown on the translation of *Kapi* as peacocks, but what other "rain bird" can be meant?

² James Horneli, "Survivals of the Use of Oculi in Modern Boats", *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. LIII, 1923, pp. 289 *et seq.*

Susa and Sumeria. The signs have a remarkable resemblance to Sumerian writing and the numeration is similar.¹

When the Aryan tribes entered India they had no word for ocean. "Samudra", the later Sanskrit word for ocean, originally signified the confluence of rivers, for its literal meaning is "collection of waters". There is no reference in the *Rigveda* to the tides, but "treasures of the Samudra" may refer to "pearls or the gains of trade".² References are also made to a man named Bhujyu who was saved from the deep by the Asvins, but the suggestion that he was shipwrecked in the Indian Ocean is not generally accepted. It is possible, however, that before the end of the Rigvedic period the Aryans had come into close touch with seafaring communities with whom they need not necessarily have waged war. There is only one mention of a fish (Matsya), in the *Rigveda*. "Fish," say Macdonell and Keith, "is not a known diet in the *Rigveda*."³ In a Sutra there is a reference to *Matsya Sammada*, the king of fishes, which is of very special interest because of the late Vedic references to a tribe called Matsyas ("fishes"), which may have had a fish totem and was probably non-Aryan. The Matsyas became associated with the Kuru-Panchala confederacy, which included the Purus, Bharatas, &c., in the sacred country of Kuru-Kshetra, the centre of Brahmanic culture. The view that Brahmanic ideas and customs, which were later than the Vedic and differed from them, were wholly of Aryan origin is now regarded as a very open question. Babylonian cultural influences entered India in late Vedic times by way of Persia, and it is believed by some that Dravidian culture contributed also to the Brahmanic complex.

Echoes of the tribal and dynastic struggles of the early

¹ C. J. Gadd and Sidney Smith in *Illustrated London News*, 4th Oct., 1924, p. 614.

² *Vedic Index*, Vol. II, 432.

³ *Ibid.*, II, p. 432.

Indo-Aryan period survive in the *Mahá-bhárata*, the longest epic poem in the world. The "kernel" of it is believed to date back to 500 B.C., but it grew gradually in the process of time. It may be, as has been suggested, that the brothers and cousins (Pandavas and Kurus) who figure in it were not originally individuals but tribes. Their great battle took place at Kuru-Kshetra on the right bank of the Jumna. The Pandava capital was Indraprastha (Delhi), while the capital of the Kurus was Hastinapura. In the other Hindu epic, the *Ramáyana*,¹ are memories of the Aryan cultural penetration of Southern India and Ceylon. The tribes of Bengal appear to represent mingled Aryan and Dravidian peoples, the latter being, however, in the majority.

It was during the Brahmanic period that the caste system was elaborated. The word for caste was "varna", which signified colour, and the caste colours were white, yellow, red, and black. As these colours are applied also to the post-Vedic "Yugas" (mythical Ages of the World), and each caste is connected with a "Yuga", it is evident that "varna" had originally a doctrinal significance. The two leading castes were the Brahman (priest), and Kshatriya (military aristocrats). If both these were "pure Aryans", they should have had the same colour, but in the caste system their colours differed. The Vaisya caste was that of the traders, and the lowest caste was the Sudra.

The Brahmans ultimately became a caste of hereditary priests and the Kshatriyas a caste of hereditary princes and warriors. Between the two there developed a struggle for supremacy, like the struggle between the Druids and military aristocrats of Gaul. It is probable, however, that this rivalry did not have origin in India. The Kurus, who were late comers, may have introduced it from the Iranian plateau which, during the Kassite period in Babylonia, appears to

¹ Pronounced *ra-my'ana*.

have been subjected to Mesopotamian cultural influences. As has been noted, Egyptian elements permeated Babylonia during the Kassite period. The caste system may have developed among the Aryan peoples as a result of contact with the older civilizations, taking on a peculiarly Aryan colouring. The chariot-using peoples who entered Babylonia during the Kassite period and Egypt during the Hyksos period also entered Europe. They may have been the "carriers" of the culture complexes which can be traced in areas as far apart as Northern India and Western Europe. Pliny has remarked on the resemblance between the Druids of Gaul and the Magi of Persia. In India the caste system developed under the pressure of its own peculiar racial and social conditions. Numerous castes came into existence in the process of time.

It was because he sought to abolish the caste system that Gautama Buddha became the leader of a great religious movement. His new religion was a revolt against Brahmanism, which was fundamentally concerned with sacrificial ceremonies. But long before his day a school of teachers composed the Upanishads, those religious writings which regard sacrifices as futile, and emphasize the need for "knowledge". Buddhism spread eastward among the peoples who had never been completely subjected to Aryan influence. Its high doctrines were contaminated, however, owing to "cult-mixing", and Buddha became one of the many gods; but the strength of Buddhism lay chiefly in its opposition to the caste system. It gave an opportunity to military adventurers to aspire to thrones. Ultimately it attracted, probably on that account alone, the Scythians who invaded India. They readily adopted Buddhism, which, in its purer aspect, was quite antagonistic to Scythian modes of life and thought.

Buddha died in the fifth century B.C. As his death is

declared to have been due to a diet of pork, which was taboo in India, it may be that his doctrinal revolt was more ambitious and thorough than we have now means of knowing.

When in 325 B.C. Alexander had reached the Hydaspes River, there came to his camp a rebel who had escaped from the Magadha kingdom, and his life was spared. This was the adventurer who, after Alexander's departure from India, became the leader of several hill tribes, and ultimately had the King of Magadha murdered. He then seized the throne (about 315 B.C.), and became known to the Greeks by his title of Chandragupta ("moon protected").

Seleucus I entered India after his successful campaigns in Susiana, Persia, and Media, to endeavour to re-establish Macedonian supremacy there. He crossed the Indus, but found it necessary to conclude a treaty of peace with Chandragupta, and that powerful ruler had certainly the best of the bargain. A marriage alliance confirmed the friendly relations which were then established.

Chandragupta did not himself embrace Buddhism, nor did his son, Bindusāra, who was known to the Greeks as Amitrochates, a rendering of his Sanskrit title which signified "foe slayer". The third great king of this Dynasty was the famous Asoka, a name still revered by Buddhists. He is said to have seized the throne by murdering his elder brother, the Crown Prince, in the middle of the third century B.C. For a time he was a severe ruler, and his subjects called him "Kala Asoka" ("Bad Asoka"). When, however, he was converted to Buddhism he became known as "Dharma Asoka" ("Good Asoka"). During his reign the Buddhists held the Council of Pataliputra (249 B.C.), and missionaries were sent out to preach in various lands. In one of his edicts Asoka records that he sent envoys to four Greek kings. One of the countries to which missionaries



D 635

Photo. H. G. Ponting, F.R.G.S.

ASOKA'S PILLAR, DELHI

King Asoka, who made Buddhism the official religion in India and sent missionaries to other lands, had Buddhist edicts and records of Buddhist missionary efforts engraved on pillars and rocks.

were sent was that of the Seleucid monarch, Antiochus II. These Buddhist missionaries were carriers not only of doctrines connected with sun and serpent worship, the transmigration of souls, &c., but also of medicinal herbs and fruit trees which were planted beside wells which they dug for the benefit of travellers and their beasts of burden. The sacred "Bo tree" of the Buddhists was the *Ficus religiosa*. Like the early peoples of the milk cult, they revered all "milk-yielding trees". The cult of Jainism is as old as Buddhism, but it did not spread outside India.

The kingdom seized by Chandragupta had, during his reign, grown into an empire extending across Northern India from sea to sea. It is known to historians as the Mauriyan Empire, after his name of Mauriya, and it endured for nearly a century and a half (320-180 B.C.). It was modelled on the Persian system, its kings being absolute dictators like Cyrus and his successors. A description of the Magadha kingdom and its peoples was written by the Greek ambassador Megasthenes, but only fragments of it have survived. The capital was Patna.

The last king of the Mauriyan Dynasty, the tenth of his line, was overthrown by his general named Brihadratha. He established the Shunga Dynasty, which endured till 66 B.C., and it was followed by the Kanwa Dynasty, which succumbed under the attacks of the Sakæ, a branch of the Scythians of Central Asia.

About the middle of the second century B.C. the ancestors of the people who were to become known later as the Huns had displaced the Scythians on the Tibetan border. These Scythians overran the Græco-Bactrian kingdom, which extended into North-western India. Greek authority lingered on in the Punjab, however, until 25 B.C., when the Scythians' influence was being extended rapidly. Ultimately the Scythians reached the Jumna, and their kings

became Buddhists. Buddhism had by this time become very much debased, having been broken up into a number of sects. In the second year B.C. a Chinese Emperor sent two envoys to India to obtain Buddhist literature, but the Buddhist movement in China did not assume great dimensions until eighty years later.

It was not from India, but from Central Asia that the early Buddhist missionaries entered China. The Indian Buddhists were at the time engaged in a struggle with the Brahmans, while their own sects were involved in fierce doctrinal controversies.

Students of culture-drifting find much that is interesting and suggestive in the early history of Buddhism. The purity of the ancient beliefs was preserved in outlying districts long after heresies had contaminated the faith in the area of origin. In various districts, too, the new religion blended with earlier faiths, and was influenced by individual teachers.

Ancient Chinese Chronology

ANCIENT CHINESE CHRONOLOGY

Chinese in Shensi, *c.* 1700 B.C.
Shang Dynasty ends, *c.* 1122 B.C.
Confucius, *c.* 550-479 B.C.
Chou Dynasty ends, *c.* 249 B.C.
Great Wall completed, *c.* 221 B.C.
Destruction of Classics, *c.* 213 B.C.
Chin (or Ts'in) Dynasty ends, 206 B.C.
Western Han Dynasty, 206 B.C.-A.D. 25.
Author of "Historical Records", 163-85 B.C.
Wu Ti, 140-87 B.C.
Chao Ti, 86-74 B.C.
Huan Ti, 73-49 B.C.
Yuan Ti, 48-32 B.C.
Eastern Han Dynasty, A.D. 25-226.

CHAPTER XXIII

The Early Chinese Empire

The Mythical Age—the Chou Dynasty—Confucius and Lao-tse—No Chinese Empire until after Alexander's Time—Bronze Age in China—Links with the West—Jade and Pottery—Fu-lin and Rome—The Chin Dynasty—Building of Great Wall—Oxus changes its Course—The earlier Han Dynasty—Wu Ti, a famous Emperor—"Celestial Horses" imported from Iran—Chinese Seafarers—The "Islands of the Blest"—Buddhism in China—Parthian royal Monk—Family Links with Rome.

The early history of China is lost in obscurity. Native traditions regarding the "Three Primordial Sovereigns", Fu-hi, Shen-nung, and Huang-ti (2852-2597 B.C.), cannot be relied upon. These rulers were followed by four others, including Yao, during whose reign the Deluge took place. The imported story of the Deluge became confused with traditions connected with the areas flooded by the Yellow River. Yu, the Emperor, is said to have, after eighteen years of arduous labour, completed the drainage operations begun by his father. He came to the throne in 2205 B.C.—that is, during the early part of the Middle Kingdom period in Egypt and at the dawn of the Hammurabi Age in Babylonia.

With Yu begins the Hsia Dynasty (2205-1766 B.C.). It was followed in turn by the Shang (1766-1122 B.C.), and the Chou (1122-249 B.C.). During the long Chou Dynasty, Confucius, Mencius, and Lao-tse (founder of Taoism) are supposed to have flourished.

It was during the next Dynasties, the Chin (which ended

in 207 B.C.), and the Han, that the Chinese states were united as an empire. The Chinese Empire, therefore, did not come into existence until after the death of Alexander the Great. "It cannot be strongly enough emphasized on every occasion," writes Dr. Laufer,¹ "that Chinese civilization, as it appears now, is not a unit and not the exclusive production of the Chinese, but the final result of the cultural efforts of a vast conglomeration of the most varied tribes, an amalgamation of ideas accumulated from manifold quarters and widely differentiated in space and time; briefly stated, this means China is not a nation, but an empire, a political, but not an ethnical unit."

We know nothing regarding a Chinese Neolithic Age. Archæologists have yet to explore the vast territory embraced by the Chinese Empire. When, however, we come to the archæological Bronze Age some suggestive facts emerge. China was at its "dawn" apparently not isolated from the rest of the world, and its civilization was consequently not of spontaneous generation. The evidence afforded by Bronze Age finds is summarized in the *British Museum Guide to the Antiquities of the Bronze Age* (p. 107), as follows:

"At both extremities of the vast area stretching from Lake Baikal through the Siberian Steppes across the Ural mountains to the basin of the Volga, and even beyond to the valleys of the Don and Dnieper, there have been found . . . implements and weapons marked by the same peculiarities of form and by a single style of decoration. These objects exhibit an undoubted affinity with those discovered in China; but some of the distinctive features have been traced in the bronze industry of Hungary and the Caucasus; for example, pierced axes and sickles have a close resemblance to Hungarian and Caucasian forms. The Siberian bronzes have this relationship both in the East and West, but their kinship with Chinese antiquities being the more

¹ *Jade*, p. 57.

obvious, it is natural to assume that the culture which they represent is of East Asiatic origin."

It is further noted that the Chinese bronze artifacts "are of developed, and therefore not of primitive forms". The prototypes have not been found in China nor in the Ural Altaic region.

The Chinese appear to have been settled in the Shensi Province about 1700 B.C. They found jade there and began to work it. Jade had already acquired a religious value. It was imported into Babylonia during the Sumerian period, and it was used like flint in Asia Minor. We do not know whether the Sumerians imported it from Asia Minor, where jade *in situ* may have been discovered, or from distant Khotan. The carriers of bronze into Europe valued jade and searched for and found it in Switzerland and elsewhere. But, as Laufer has emphasized, there was, so far as Europe is concerned, a psychological motive for the search for jade. "They (the early Europeans) gradually learned to appreciate the value of this tough and compact substance, and then set to hunting for natural supplies."¹

The Chinese were evidently not the first to utilize jade, nor the first to impart to it a religious value. Some of the Chinese inscriptions on jades are much later than the objects inscribed. The ancient scholars appear to have drawn largely on their imaginations when endeavouring to throw light on historical problems.

Even when we come to pottery, former views have to be revised. The Chinese, according to Dr. Embden, had no inherent talent for making pottery. They imported and did not invent the potter's wheel, and they do not appear to have imported it before the Chou Dynasty. Pre-Chou pottery is crude and scanty, and of purely archæological interest. Glaze was not introduced into China before the Han

¹ *Jade*, p. 5.

Dynasty, and it came from Rome. Glass was imported into China during the early part of the Christian era.

With the potter's wheel the elements of a complex culture reached China, which came into closer touch with the West than before. But really intimate contact was of much later date. The Hellenic colonies in Asia spread their influence far and wide, and China was stimulated from Iran and India to develop a civilization on new and higher lines. Laufer shows in his *The Diamond: A Study of Chinese and Hellenic Folklore*, that the Chinese knew of the western country of "Fu-lin"—that is, Syria and the Byzantine Empire. According to Pelliot¹ "Fu-lin" (earlier Fu-rim) was derived from "Rōm" (Rome), the intermediary form being "Frōm", which issued from the Armenian "Hrom" or "Horom" and Pahlavi "Hrōm". But the earliest known reference to "Fu-lin" in Chinese writings dates from the T'ang Dynasty (A.D. 618-906). Rome was, however, in touch with China long before the T'ang. The peach and the apricot, native Chinese trees, were transmitted to Rome and Greece about the first century A.D. They reached Iran in the second or the first century B.C., and it is probable, as has been suggested, that the carriers were the silk merchants.

The Chou Dynasty, supposed to have been founded in 1122 B.C., is believed to have been established by intruders of Tartar stock. Human sacrifices were offered to the spirits of ancestors. Several states were united in loose alliance. There were frequent wars with barbarians in which the Chin state took a prominent part. The Chins ultimately founded in 221 B.C. the Chin Dynasty, which endured for about fourteen years. Their first Emperor was Shih-huang-ti, who abolished the Chou feudal institutions, and reigned over a great part of China.

¹ Quoted by Laufer, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

During the Chin (or Ts'in) Dynasty the Great Wall was completed. It had been begun towards the close of the fourth century. As a result, it would appear, of the wars of Alexander the Great, the displaced tribes had exercised a pressure on China and the Chin people had to protect their lands against invasion. The completion of the wall was effected by Shi-huang-ti in ten years, and it then stretched a distance of over 1200 miles. In some places it was an earthen rampart; but in the danger zones it was faced by brick, and about thirty feet high, twenty-five feet at the base, and fifteen feet at the top. Like the Roman walls in Britain it had towers or "block houses" occupied by troops.

"The building of the Great (Chinese) Wall", says Kropotkin, "was an event fraught with the greatest consequences, and one may say without exaggeration that it contributed powerfully to the premature downfall of the Roman Empire." It is held, in this connexion, that the wall, by closing China against the Mongolian and Turki peoples who had been endeavouring to achieve conquests of territory, set in motion tribal and racial movements which ultimately led to the invasion of Europe by Asiatic pastoralists.¹

Another cause of racial disturbance was the Oxus River, which suddenly changed its bed after the wall was constructed. It then found its way to the Caspian Sea, and it is believed a large lake ceased to exist. The Oxus subsequently changed its course again and formed the Sea of Aral. When the first change occurred the whole aspect of the Central Plateau of Asia must have been completely changed.

After the death of Shih-huang-ti, which occurred in 210 B.C., there were revolts in subject states. The successor of this ruler reigned for only three years; he was

¹ *Geographical Journal*, XXII, pp. 24, 176, 331, 772.

assassinated by Chao Kao, a court official, who placed upon the throne the heir Tsze Ying. The young Emperor, after a couple of months, however, had to surrender to Liu-pang of Pei, who commanded one of the rebel armies, and the Chin Dynasty then came to an end (206 B.C.).

After a period of confusion and unrest, the Empire was again consolidated under the new Western Han Dynasty by Liu-pang, a man of humble origin, who was given the posthumous title of Kao Tsu. He had proved himself a capable general. He died in 193 B.C. when his son was only a boy, and his widow acted as regent until her death in 180 B.C. The next Emperor was Wen Ti, the son of a concubine of Kao-Tsu, who reformed the criminal law code, and was a patron of letters, and interested himself in Buddhism. He died in 157 B.C. and was succeeded by Ching-ti. The next Emperor, Wu Ti (140-87 B.C.), was the most famous ruler of the Hans.

During the Chin Dynasty, the Empire became known in Central Asia by the name of China, or its related forms. Wu Ti's chief enemy was the Huing-nu, with whom he was constantly at war, and he cultivated friendly relations with the Iranians, who were also enemies of the Hufing-nu. It is known that he sent to Eastern Iran his general Chang Chien to negotiate with the Scythians (Yueh-chi), and the ultimate result of his efforts was the establishment of regular caravan trade.

From the Wu-sun, a fair people in Chinese Turkestan, the Chinese had been for some time receiving horses of a better breed than the Mongolian ponies used in the royal army. A still more superior breed was obtained from the Scythian "horse tamers". With these horses, which were reputed to be descended from a heavenly horse (*t'ien ma*), was imported the food on which they flourished—alfalfa (*medicago sativa*), the Greek "medic grass". Chang Chien

brought the seeds from Fergana, and these were sowed in the grounds of the palace of Wu Ti, who became a breeder of the famous "Celestial horses". Chang Chien also introduced the grape vine into China. He had spent a year in Bactria and there obtained knowledge of the cultivation of the grape and the process of making wine. In the Chinese book, the *Shi-ki*, it is recorded that the people of Fergana, which the Chinese knew as *Ta-yüan*, stored their wine in large vessels and kept it for years. Other cultivated plants were subsequently introduced from Iran by the Chinese.

Wu Ti's reign was a long and prosperous one. The monarch was a patron of literature and science. He introduced literary degrees and had a change effected in the Calendar. Alchemy was one of his special interests. The empire was greatly extended towards the south until it included Cochin-China.

Chao Ti (86-74 B.C.) is remembered best as a monarch who reduced taxation on property. Of his successor, Hüan Ti (73-49 B.C.), it is told that he married a girl of humble birth, the daughter of the official who had saved his life. Yuan Ti (48-32 B.C.) was successful in his wars against the Huing-nu. At the beginning of the Christian era the grandmother of the child Emperor, Ping Ti, acted as regent. She was, however, but a tool in the hands of the prime minister, Wang Mang, who ultimately disposed of the royal heir and declared himself the Emperor. He was ultimately overcome and put to death, and the Eastern Han Dynasty was established (A.D. 25).

When the Chinese Empire was being extended during the Chin and the earlier Han Dynasty, the coastal seafaring peoples were brought under subjection. New cultural influences then permeated the Empire. Maritime enterprise was stimulated and Chinese mythology was enriched

by entirely new elements. The Chinese were ultimately brought into touch with Burma, Java, Borneo, and Malaya. Their boats, according to Keble Chatterton, had been developed from the ancient Egyptian models, as had those of Burma, Ceylon and India.¹

The poetry of early seafaring is found in the Chinese myths regarding the "Islands of the Blest", their Eastern Paradise, which gradually displaced the Western Paradise, supposed to be situated among the mountains of the north-west. According to the famous sage Tung-fang Shuo, who lived in the second century B.C., there were ten of these islands. One is named Fu-sang, and it has been identified by different scholars with California, Mexico, Japan and Formosa. The name signifies "Land of the Leaning Mulberry". These trees are said to have grown to a great height. Pious Chinese emperors dispatched expeditions to search for the fabled islands of Paradise on which lived white immortal saints whose food was *li chi*, the fungus of immortality, and whose drink was the "water of life". During the reign of Wu Ti the fungus was grown at the Imperial palace, and a hymn was composed in its praise, while Wu Ti proclaimed an amnesty in the Empire.

The Chinese dragon was developed under later Buddhist influence. It was in the first century of our era that the Buddhist evangelization of China made a serious beginning, the efforts of earlier missionaries having been a comparative failure. The movement was given a great impetus in A.D. 148 when a Prince of Parthia, son of the Parthian king who fought against the Roman Emperor Trajan, became a monk and laboured in China. The aunt of this Buddhist had been for several years a prisoner at Rome, and was liberated by Hadrian.

Christianity had before this period spread into Irania,

¹ *Sailing Ships and their Story*, p. 310.

and there were groups of Christian missionaries at Balkh and Merv.

China's cultural relations with the West were extending rapidly at the dawn of the New Age ushered in by the birth of Christ.

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